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SOUTH AFRICA

A GLANCE AT CURRENT CONDITIONS AND POLITICS

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BY

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NEGRO UNIVERSITIES PRESS
NEW YORK

Originally published in 1905
by Longmans, Green, and Co.

Reprinted 1969 by
Negro Universities Press
A Division of Greenwood Publishing Corp.
New York

PRINTED IN UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

PREFACE

My professional work has carried me to many places in England, and even, upon occasion, to Scotland and Ireland, but never until recently invited me to visit any of our colonies. In 1904, however, a professional engagement made it necessary for me to go to South Africa, and the opportunity that visit would afford me of studying some of the Colonial questions—which are now really Imperial questions—on the spot, was one of the reasons which made me take upon me the burden of the business and tediousness of the voyage. While in the Colonies I had exceptional opportunities of seeing a good deal of the life of some of them, and of making myself acquainted with Colonial opinion.

There are at the present time many urgent political problems presented to South Africa for practical solution, and to any one who is interested in the great social and State questions at home, these have an interest which is beyond that which attaches to the comparative anatomy of national organisms. In the human frame "each part calls the furthest, brother," according to George

Herbert, and so it is with the trunk and limbs of this great Empire. There is between these a "private amity." We see that politicians at home are eager to make capital out of the political attitude of our Colonies, and perhaps that is the more easily accomplished if the politicians are ignorant of the real aspect of current Colonial events, and of the real trend of current Colonial opinion. The chance of making myself acquainted with these was eagerly accepted; and the jottings—for they are little more—that I made, mostly on the homeward-bound ship, are printed in the following pages. I kept my eyes and ears open. I was the recipient of opinions and views, and after seeing what was to be seen, and hearing what was to be said, I have attempted to give my own opinion of all that I learned—if that is not too pompous a word—in the following miscellaneous pages.

J. H. B. B.

LONDON,
February, 1905.

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A GLANCE AT CURRENT CONDITIONS AND POLITICS

I

I THOUGHT to cheat winter as the swallows do by going south, and far south, at the time when November puts a cowl of fog on England. No one can, I think, go six thousand miles away from home, six thousand nautical miles—for "we always reckon in nautical miles," as the captain, every inch "a salt," says—without having regrets. It may not be so when you are very young, for with youth novelty is everything, and hope is not to be gainsaid. But with age it is very different. To the old, hope has no such magnificent promises to hold out. The old have deep anchor-roots of habit; the slow growth of years and the breaking of these makes old hearts sore. I had almost hoped that in the balance sheet against these regrets I might be able to place the incomparable advantage of getting away from England at its worst and darkest—when the sky wears masks, when the days are sullen or rancorous; but it was not to be. I left on a November day which

was as sane as a spring *débutante.* The trees had not lost all their leaves, and those that remained were more like flames than leaves, so bright did the yellows and crimsons look in the mellow sunlight. But there could be no thought of turning back. Where imagination had pointed I was bound to go, and so from the ocean pier, which had another bluff of people on it, and was a-flutter with handkerchiefs and noisy with good-byes, we sailed slowly down Southampton water. And was my old heart quite unmoved? Not quite. Then the regrets surged up. The inscrutableness of the whole thing now twanged of fate, and the orange-tawny light of the west was fading out into darkness, and the darkness seemed to fill me too. But although November was not so dark as was its wont, and although the clouds which usually loll in England at that season were now high up in air when I turned my face southwards, there was another atmosphere which was gloomy enough. It was only a fortnight before our going that the tardy Baltic Fleet had waged unequal war with our Hull fishing-boats, and now we sailed in the red wake of that murderous navy. Some of those who had booked passages by the R.M.S. —— did not sail with us. Ah, their timidity made us think ourselves heroes! I saw one gentleman strut as if he remembered Drake and Hawkins. The captain promised that we should see something of these highwaymen ships — a promise which blenched the faces of some mothers who had their babies on board. But, notwithstanding

this cloud of smoke on the horizon, our faces were to the south, and the thought that with every revolution of the screw, which left flowing white ringlets from the pushing bow, we were making our way in the long, white arrow of a ship into the summer of the South; that was the large and imaginative horizon that was opening out before us. It was not as if we had, as some travellers have, followed the swallows every year. A profession had "hobbled" us in the lean pastures of England in years past; but now, at last, freedom was our friend. We were no longer circumscribed in our hopes or the roamings which are born of these—by these "anklets," professional engagements—we were, almost for the first time, summer hunting in the bleak winter. It takes some magic to bring hope back into old brains, which have become dulled by routine; but it is a fact that this long excursion made me feel as if some of my burden of years had fallen from me, and as if a window looking south had been opened for me in the blank wall of staid custom.

As I said, we were on board, and the engines, with their dull throb, were bending willingly to the work of bearing us away from England, which had fallen into night, to the South, which we felt was smiling to welcome us.

II

But there was more in our journey than merely dogging the summer, although that was much. We were going to a country which had only a few years ago been making history with the cruel pen of war. It is true that for those who have eyes to read the small print of history, it is being written importantly every day in the dull domestic annals, but we are all running in these days, and for those who run you must have the large letters, the leaded type of great events to attract their hurried attention. And here we were going to a country which still bore in its arid soil and pestering dust the footprints of iron-heeled war. Time had not relaxed the knotted fingers of the stone and iron block-houses—which, if we may borrow a simile from chess, was check by means of a castle to the roving mobility of the Boers. Those graves too, recent graves, are not yet forgotten! Ah, they soon are! Human nature is always passing acts of oblivion, and under these and fresh layers of events history soon becomes obsolete. But here we were going to a country where it was, so to speak, still "piping hot." We had not forgotten the

events, the regrettable incidents, the indignations which bit like acids, the enthusiasms which glowed like wine. These in loud echoes were still in us, and all these made the history not only close to our memories, but close to our hearts.

Africa has, too, another interest; it is the grave of reputations. I know not one great name that has long survived a term of work, or war, or office in South Africa. That is one of its sad aspects.

III

But now that we are embarked on this enterprise of six thousand miles of sea, what is to be said of it? Any one can, and I dare say many have, described the voyage to the Cape, the passage from the rigour of an English winter, the avoidance of the slow convalescence of an English spring, the divulging of the full lusty health and strength of a southern summer; these are easy invitations to facile pens. Indeed, this is done to some extent in ordinary guide-books, and I suppose even in the advertisements of lines of steamboats. It would be absurd to attempt to follow such footsteps with a jaded pen (if that is not a mixed metaphor). But there is one thing that has never happened before, and that is, that there has never been this "me" in transit to the world's end. No one has anticipated that. Here I am in the firm ground of copyright. I will not tell you of the cloud on the horizon, which was France; or of the other blue cloud which emerged a day later, which the captain clapped the name of "Spain" upon. Not even of the shoal of glistening grampuses which rollicked with the waves in the Bay of Biscay; or of the days, one "all sunshine

before and sunshine behind," another pearl-grey for the most part; but with islands of glistening light, where the clouds let the sunshine fall in rare spots upon the sea. It is not because these things have been included in the guide-books, but because no book can do justice to them. To succeed we must not attempt too much. Wordsworth, when he saw London from Westminster Bridge in the early morning, said its "mighty heart was lying still." But the ocean's mighty heart never rests. It is always athrob with tides, with waves, with the memory of storms, and even the waves are alive with ripples. As we speed through it in the great ship she turns up two great banks of flowering white chrysanthemums, one on either side of the ploughing bow, and these short-lived blossoms pass at once into a fine malachite of green and white which streams away to the stern. But the day phenomena of the implacable sea are not stranger than those of the night. The distance is, under the cloudy awning of the night, unredeemed darkness. Not a saving star! But the ship rides on sparkles of light. The foam gleams with the sea's glow-worm lights, and in the distance there are to be seen the peeping lights of another toiler of the deep, another soul-carrying craft. This morning we were in sight of one of the Orient line. It was on the longer path to Australia, and the meeting and parting in the ocean was not without its significance. Where roads meet on land there are paths, not only for feet, but for thoughts; and when the courses of two ships meet at sea

there is occasion for airy voyages along the ocean ways. I think it was Bailey who said that "friendship went by me like a ship at sea." Friendship, love itself, is not unlike the short and distant comradeship of two great vessels in the patch of day upon the ocean. It is a ship, an Orient liner. It comes from home; it is going out to a far-away colony; we can see the white foam of its prow, the trail of its smoke in the air. That is all. Of those on board, what do we know? And friendship and love, are they like this?

But enough of the sea, with its ever-varying monotony, the dim mirrors of its waves, its swinging cradle for the ship and all that are in it. It is a sycophant, the sea. The sky changes and nods and smiles at the sea, and the sea smiles and nods back again, but always as if a new thought or caprice or feeling were behind the smile. This is flirting on a grand scale, and we are all day long bathed in the dazzling smile of sea and sky, and at night we are between the impenetrable frown of these two monsters. And yet in the morning there is a great resurrection, and we are again in sunshine, as if the ship was a courtier always in the sun's suite.

IV

When we left the ocean quay at Southampton, there was at least one of the waving handkerchiefs which refused to flutter; it was damp with tears. It was that of a woman or lady—it is difficult to tell when to apply one or the other of these words—in a somewhat faded dress. She was not smart by any means—possibly a little dowdy; and if there was a fashion about her rustling black dress, it was a fashion of days gone by. It is not easy for a purse, into which the tap of small dividends runs slowly, to keep pace with the capricious fancies of light-headed Fashion, and it is the more difficult when the passage-money for a giddy niece to Cape Town has to be found in the lean purse. Not that Miss Dowden, we will call her, cared to keep in the fashion; she lived in quite a small house, but in some spacious memories. Her father had been an officer in the army, and, according to his daughter, had greatly distinguished himself. He had been, too, according to the same authority, an exceedingly brave man, and although no corroboration of these statements comes from anywhere, it is quite possible that they are authentic, for there have been many men brave and distinguished who have been unknown to repute,

but whose memories are dear to loving hearts. The distinguished officer had lived long on his half-pay, and, dying, had left all that he had, including the care of his ne'er-do-well son's daughter, to Miss Dowden. How he came to be the guardian of his grand-daughter is easily told. His son had entered the army, had married beneath him, had drunk himself to death, and his widow had disappeared in the crowd, leaving the little girl to the care of Colonel Dowden, and when he died the child was brought up at the Evergreens, under the pinched care of her aunt. It was a somewhat curious household. In the first place, it had everything on a small scale. Necessity dictated that. It was, too, a very puritan establishment, for Miss Dowden, good woman, "feared God," and night and morning offered up intercessions to a God who, in her frowning creed, might have been as "red in tooth and claw" as Nature herself. That was strange, for Miss Dowden was one of those women who would not harm a fly; and when a wasp invaded her dwelling, she laid hold of it with a fold of her handkerchief and shook it out at the window—a surprising experience for the wasp, no doubt. But, further, it was quite a quiet, grave household at the Evergreens. Miss Dowden was not given to laughter; indeed, her only sin was gossip, and even that was of the mild inquisitive, and not of the rampant, scandalous sort. Her servant, whose name was Scotland, had served the colonel, was very old, and had a face wrinkled by time, as a ribstone pippin is by keeping, and she too was a solemn woman. The child

of the squalid union we have spoken of brought light and laughter into the dull Evergreens, and the two old women, who were shaken from sedateness by her play, learned to love her as old bones love the afternoon.

But nests are only for a season, and there was a young man who looked upon Alice Dowden and saw that she was fair, and, as young men will, made love to her, and her face and heart—a light heart—turned to him. He was a young medical man, with some good looks and no practice. And, having her consent, he married the girl, and then went away to "push his fortune," as the old phrase has it, in South Africa, leaving his wife still to the care of Miss Dowden. And now the little girl, grown up, who had grown into Miss Dowden's heart, was leaving England to join her husband, and the old lady had come to see her off, and her handkerchief was so wet that it would not flutter, and her eyes were red with weeping. I saw the young wife on board, and looked to see whether her pretty eyes were as red; but no, they were sparkling, and her handkerchief, which was mostly lace—her aunt had given it to her—it would have fluttered in a very puff of wind. Ah, it is such a different thing losing a child—that your heart has adopted—and going to join a husband—that your fancy has chosen, and that perhaps habit will make a real husband in time.

V

THIS morning, after a little breeze, which blew the foaming tops off the sleek waves—which soon blew the sky clear again and let the sunshine resume—we came in sight of a great transport, and we passed it close enough to see the number (No. 6) upon its grey side. It asked for news, but we had none to give; but the thousand men in khaki, who lined the sides of the ship like living cliffs, gave us some, for they recognized a Castle liner new from England—England, where they would be in two or three days almost—and they gave us a cheer for "England, home, and beauty," I suppose; but as we had our faces away from home, and were, moreover, quite genteel people, our cheer was not so hearty as theirs, although in courtesy we tried to respond. It was the heartiness of their greeting far more than the course of the transport that told us indubitably that they were homeward bound.

What shall I say of my fellow-passengers, or have I a right to say anything merely because chance association on board ship has made them, if I choose, a prey to my pen? It is the usual motley crowd

that you see on board of any such liner, and thus inconspicuous commonplaceness must protect them. A typical Johannesburger here, an unmistakable Jew there, and many more of the same type. A girl with eyes that flirt, a woman that reads novels all day and veils a real, beautiful world with a vulgar, trashy, ideal one. A mother with her toy, the baby. "A captain" who had been captain in a mine; but the title imposed on us. The lady who was taking out her cook. The young lady who was going out to be married, but who admitted that if she did not like her *fiancé* "on the view" that she would go home and marry another man. A youngish lady who was not going out to be married; but that was not her fault. What is to be said of these? Really, if anything interesting were to be said, I would not hesitate to use my opportunity; but they are mostly, so far as I see and know them, as uninteresting, as stupid, as commonplace as any equal number of ordinary people anywhere. But, after all, they are not so commonplace as they seem, and their seeming is my common superficial view of them. Here is one lady (again I use the word with hesitation) who has left two sons in England at school, and a bit of her heart is there. That may be commonplace, but it is beautiful. Just now a quite common-looking man helped with a tenderness which spoke of heart a quite commonplace, oldish woman out of the writing-room. What was it? They had been companions for thirty years; it might be a companionship which had

begun with love—a love which had passed into habit; but even now her helplessness and discomfort at sea has sounded the depths, quite out of sight of his aging heart, and has made him as tender and as courteous as he was when they were courting; and she—she is almost glad to suffer to feel his arms about her, and his solicitude compassing her. And I dare say if I could see and know all my fellow-passengers who walk the deck, who lounge in deck-chairs, who play rubber quoits, and who are punctual with punctual appetites at meal-times, there might be some beauty in all of them. I might see sparks of beautiful phosphorescence in them, dark as they seem, just as I saw glow-worm sparks in the dark Atlantic waters as they ran in black waves past the ship in the unstarred night.

There are, too, to my superficial eyes—for I will take the blame—there are, too, a few Americans on board who are, I believe, "pushing their way" (it is the old phrase, but I believe it fits their methods) in South Africa. The fact is, the Americans are enterprising on a magnificent scale. Englishmen are less so than they used to be. Perhaps it is because the youth of our nation is past, while America is, so to speak, in its teens. And perhaps it is that fact that makes these more disagreeable than people ought to be. The hobbledehoyhood of a man is a trying time. Then he is unboundedly selfish, ignorantly self-opinionated, stupidly aggressive, and as self-conceited as a beauty whose looking-glass

has spoiled her. And it may be so with this enterprising nation. A man and a people require mellowing before they are tolerable, and America, with all its greatness, is not mellow yet. Let me say I met Americans in Johannesburg concerning whom not one word of the above-written sentences would be true. Of these Americans I would say that they were not only mellow but ripe, and only differed from Englishmen in being more deliberately right in most things when the Englishman would have been impetuously wrong. Most sweeping generalizations are faulty.

VI

MADEIRA. Some one explained—it was a little display of knowledge recently gleaned from an Encyclopædia—that Madeira had been so named from a Portuguese word meaning "timber," and that the island had got its name because of its woods. Then the wit of the party, who had only associated the word with the wine, said he had often heard of wine from the wood, and the poor joke was better received than it deserved. But, you see, the weather was fine, and we were all in good humour, and if that cannot insure a good reception for a foundling joke, nothing can. But Madeira. One of my fellow-passengers, a traveller by repute, told me in the Bay of Biscay that you could smell the flowers of Madeira three miles out at sea. Perhaps he had an exceptionally good nose, like my retriever; but no, after his assurance, I began to smell the bouquet island even in the Bay of Biscay, and the assurance made me look forward to the island as a garden in the sea.

All the day before our arrival we had sailed through summer. Although, hitherto, the weather had been fine, there had been a nip in the air, but to-day we were greeted with an open hand. The sea was blue, the sky

was clear, the waves were playing at gentle cataracts. The evening fell black, but its blackness was tempered by innumerable stars. Ah, this day was itself a holiday! And yet it did not stand alone. Every present is like the island of Madeira itself—the peak of a world beneath the sea, and on this peak the sun has lighted its beacon fire. As the night fell we passed the homeward bound *Saxon*, a floating palace with a hundred lights. But the double night fell, and sleep came not without its stars—dreams, until quite early the coming light wakened us, and on looking out, there before us stood the rocky garden in the sea.

We came upon the little archipelago in the morning before the sun had done more than gild two stray clouds over Porto Sancto. That island we had passed in the dim, blue light before the dawn, and I had from my window seen its solemn presence relieved by some sprinkled lights upon its sombre sides; but now, here we were opposite Funchal, and before long the sunlight fell upon one of the high, sharp peaks of the island. The deep-scored valleys, which run down its sides like the rock furrows of some gigantic iron plough, were now like huge cauldrons brewing purple shadows, and from some of the hill-tops streamers of mist were floating. As the light broadened, the toy town, made of toy houses, came into full, into blazing, view. The houses were exactly like those we had played with in our youth—how many years ago? Years before children's toys were made in Germany. Funchal looks, too, like a town of

allotment gardens when seen from the bay. Higher up the hills, where the white houses ceased, there were some green forests on one or other of the sharp rock ridges, and, still higher, peaks, sometimes coloured by cadmium, sometimes by deep indian red, but always bleak and barren, except here and there where there was a creeping bloom of green herbage. The whole face of the island, at least on its lower slopes, up to eighteen hundred or two thousand feet, is covered with white dots of houses coagulated in the lower town by the sea, sporadic up on the precipitous green slopes above. Here, then, we are on the very summits of a small chain of alps, which have their verdant slopes, their lancet aiguilles, and their wide, oozy bases at the Atlantic's roots. I should have desired to explore some of the deep cliff valleys which run inland, some of them with perfect spires of rock jutting from their sides or at the top of high passes, for all these valleys seemed to be cleft to the very heart of the island; but time would not permit of voyages of discovery, and I had to content myself with a glimpse of some of the picturesque streets of the town. True they were narrow. True they were paved with cobble-stones, which molested tender feet. True there were skidding-sledges drawn by patient-looking oxen in them. The houses were mostly poorly built, it may be of bricks whitewashed and not of stone. But how different all this is from our own magnificent, monotonous, squalid, vulgar Victoria Street! How different from the poor grandeur of the shanties and the sky-scraping corner houses of

Commissioner Street or Pritchard Street in Johannesburg! In these we have width enough even for the ocean current of traffic with its spray of dust. The houses are mostly of stone. The vehicles are motors; the streets are as straight as a ruler, while the streets in Funchal have untoward turns and twisting corners; but here every step you take gives you a new picture. Now some whitewashed wall, doubly whitewashed with a coat of morning sunshine, over which you see a trellis and the fading leaves of a vine upon it. Here nothing but white-wash, yellow pantiles, and green outside shutters; but the roof has sagged, and the picture is perfect. Everywhere the walls seemed to be tying gardens together, and these were always escaping, with exquisite beauty, over the walls. And such gardens! I do not know—no memory is capacious enough to remember—the names of all the flowers I saw. The hillsides were steep, and in most places they have been terraced with walls to keep the soil for the gardens from running down the hill; but everywhere nature has adopted the wall and trailed beautiful tendrils and broad leaves and green things and flowering things over it, and you would never guess now that the wall was only a step-child. It is woven into, and harmonizes with, nature's beautiful web. On the terraces you can see trees, with broad green leaves, and, underneath, clusters of bananas; here and there great lazy gourds and marrows; then a tree covered with oranges; here, again, others covered with porcupine-like clusters of the forbidding chestnut,

and I know not what else. They all come so quickly, and each new impression from the lavish hand of nature is so imperious that it gives memory too much to do, and it drops impressions as a child's lap drops the flowers of which it is too full. But amidst all these I saw in one garden on the hill an old friend—the plebeian cabbage of our northern clime. I was quite pleased to see its sonsie face, although I was holding my head quite high, I can tell you, for I had just breakfasted on a delicious omelet, some sweet bread, hot coffee, some grenadillas, figs, and custard apples. I saw, too—that I must not forget—some roses. But palms, red-hot pokers, and a dozen other plants which we pamper in the glass cases of our greenhouses at home, here grew everywhere, clung to the rocks, waved to us from the gardens. Oh, it is a prodigal garden land!

But while the flowers were beautiful, the people were villainous. It is always the lazy and the idle that ply the mean industry of begging. There is not a step in these picturesque streets without an importunate man, woman, or child who is cringing for alms. The children throw flowers at you and say they "present" them. They follow you for hundreds of yards to point out a way you do not want to go. They desire to know if you want the market, the post-office, or the railway station, and their arts of alms-asking are innumerable. Many of them smile at you. Some have a pained look upon their dusky faces. One man holds out a deformed hand to induce your purse to bleed for him. An unhung

race of villains dive for sixpences all round the ship. The Portuguese are a poor race, and that is in no way more significantly shown than by the itching palm—itching for money which is given and not earned. But at the same time they have made a town here which is artistically excellent, while we, with all our wealth and industry, have succeeded in making our towns hideous. And while in Madeira walls speak to you of art, in our towns they only boast of money.

I believe these water-beggars at Madeira earn more by plunging into the blue waters of the bay on two mornings a week than they could by a whole week's honest work—but not with impunity, for the honest work would mean education and discipline. This watery work merely means a less dishonest kind of theft. They might, in time, by honest work, achieve the great end of all labour, which is character; but as it is, they achieve the great end of all crime, of all laziness, of all begging—they lose their small souls.

I learned something more, and pleasantly enough, of Funchal from a young man and woman who sat at my table in the saloon. They had started from the steamer early, and had gone from the pier to the railway station in an ox-drawn hansom on wooden runners. They had gone up the hill in the railway between the hanging gardens and the white houses, had breakfasted in a garden which overlooked the bay, had seen the tawdry cathedral, and had come down some of the stone shoots, which serve for streets, in a toboggan which

was guided by two men with ropes, and it had all been very delightful. Even the bumps had only jolted laughter out of them. Ah, yes! I thought, it is very delightful when you are young; and when I saw the light in their eyes as they lay in deck-chairs in the afternoon and enjoyed their chocolates, I thought I knew what made the morning in Funchal so sweet to them, and I remembered old mornings myself. But there——

VII

THE ocean monotonous! How absurd! That is the idea you embark with, but when you have seen nothing but sea and sky for a succession of blinding days, you change your views. Indeed, anything but incessant meaningless change becomes monotonous to the empty mind. It is deep crying to deep. You have to have a thoroughly well-furnished intellect to suffer sameness for any length of time. That that is so, is shown by the fact of the bubbling excitement on board "a liner" over the smallest of small events. Another liner approaching, passing in the night some seven miles away, showing a blue light and sending up four wandering lights from a Roman candle, while the ship in which you are does the same—such are the courtesies of the sea—causes the whole attention of the ship to stand on tip-toe for an hour—an empty hour. There is not a Zeiss glass that is not probing these seven miles of gloom for the blue fire, and all this because the pulse of interest is beating slow—"speaking" a ship is worth a heart-throb.

But it is shown, too, by the friendships which are formed at these close quarters. At first we all took an

insular standoffishness on board with us. We were not going to know every one. Many of the people "on the view" looked very undesirable acquaintances. Of course we would be polite when spoken to; that was due to ourselves, not to them. But no more. Men on land are like the particles of a gas, and seem to repel one another; but ten days at sea alters all that. A mere "good morning" broke the ice, and now mere table companions become real friends. After dinner the men smoke and drink and play bridge, and that shows how human they are; and even the women draw together, and walk up and down the deck together arm-in-arm. To-night I have seen a good-looking young woman, who has been back in England with her baby to see her father, and who is returning all these miles to the south and her husband, walk a whole hour with rather a fat man, who felt the walk a good deal, for we were near the tropics, and he was stout; but he seemed to feel more than the heat, for, you see, she was good-looking. And all this change has been brought about by the dull magic of monotony, and the dead weight of the hours when one is at sea and has nothing to do. But any event, as I say, commands this pleasure crew. Last night we were approaching Teneriffe, and the morning was sure to have a serious dint made in it for a time. Some of the people, as full of information as an egg is full of meat, had already told us the precise height of the peak, had told us that we should see snow upon its high summit, which pierces from a summer sea into an arctic cold. Others

had told us—no doubt upon the same easily accessible authority of the guide-book—that sulphurous fumes still exude from the rifts in the volcanic sides of that otherwise quite tame volcano. But we passed Teneriffe about seven, and very few of the quidnuncs of the passage were up. So I had an interview with the stately island and its high white crest all to myself. It was very different when a bell rang about eleven o'clock in the forenoon, and it was announced that a meeting of the Deck Sports Committee was about to be held in the smoking-room; then interest had a resurrection from the grave of apathy and dulness.

VIII

Our experiences of winds have been exceptionally tame. In the Bay of Biscay we were prepared to meet some mad winds and mad waters. We expected that these might bar our path, delay our progress, and cause even worse evils than these. But no, the sea was placable and the sky as gentle as a sucking dove. Nowhere have we met the wind in its worst mood of storms. Everywhere we have met winds, but these have been winds piping that the waves might dance. Open-handed words of welcome, not the closed fist of the north, which staggers with its blows poor trembling ships. When you are weeks at sea you are thrown a good deal into the company of the winds, and they are the great winds, the giants who are heaping Pelion on Ossa, not the little winds which we know on land, and really deserve the name of draughts as they sweep down a valley or are broken into puffs by the shoulder of some shrugging hill. At sea you have nothing to look at but the clouds, and the winds are the scene-shifters of that great stage. One night they had drawn a solid, solemn curtain in front of the ship; we were not only sailing into the night, but into a tunnel in the inky mirk in front of us. Again,

they had built gorgeous high skies, with only a few floating islands in them, for the sun to gaze upon, and, with his gazing, to turn to molten gold.

The winds which have draped our days and nights have been mostly south-west winds. The south-west wind is our old familiar friend of England that prunes the trees until they slope upwards from the wall at home—the wind, too, which at home fills all the trees with twinkling lights, and here on the Atlantic is as lavish with its silver lights to the waves and ripples which give you sky-glances everywhere. All the winds hitherto have been fresh, some lusty, as their dealings with the blue waves showed; but, oh! they are so different from the winds on land, some of which are evil-smelling winds. They have been scavenging a foul town. Some are thick with dust; they have been sweeping a friable continent. Some are draggled with rain; some as hot as fever breath; but here every wind has a breathing of life. And what friends my lungs have been making of these Atlantic breezes! For such winds are the best of doctors. Let them into a slum, and fever is stricken; into a room, and faintness passes; into the rooms of our life, and old age is insured.

But I am in no foreign country with these winds; they speak the home language to my ears, for all the winds at home come from the sea, and here we seem only to be following them to their lair. But, then, our home winds are not like these, which seem to make the world a health resort. There are winds at home which

make you shiver and prophesy rheumatism; winds in the autumn which seem a patchwork of leaves; a despotic wind which comes from the tyrannous east, and nips and bites and blasts. You see nature curl up before it. When it brings vapours, it is in the form of mist, not a high-winged cloud. It makes the sunshine when it smiles show more of its teeth than is good for a smile. I have known winds in South Africa worse in their character than any wind which blows at home; winds as bitter as our east wind; winds as full of foul dust as a pin-cushion is of pins. The atmosphere of De Aar when I passed it once was not air but dust—gritty, nasty dust, which is as sure to give pneumonia as the rock-drill dust of the mines. I have known the hot breath of the scrubby veldt, with its sour karoo bushes, and I have longed for the worst wind that the north or east ever sent to England. But these winds which I have been eulogizing in a small, imperfect way are the North Atlantic winds, which blow where they list, that never with their busy fingers leave the sky alone, but are always "window-dressing" the vault of heaven; winds which are always hunting, tending, and shepherding the sheep flocks, the clouds. And, anon, we are coming to the trade winds of the equator, which tramp about the earth in viewless procession—the journeyman winds of the world. The south-east trade winds blew in our teeth for days as we were going out, heaping up waves which made the ship almost stagger, blowing lustily at night, but with a calmer breath in the morning. These somewhat

retarded our run, but still we crept steadily on to the south with indomitable engines, breasting the cauldrons of waves and the winds which blew round the world. It was in these stretches of ocean and sky that I began to blame my memory. Every day, every hour, from the common comely dawn to the high-set midday, when our shadows hid under our feet; to the resplendent evening, when the sun returned to the sea, there were pictures which, if my memory could only have retained, I would have had a Royal Academy exhibition in my head for life. Now it was a Colin Hunter, with swords of light cast on the sea; now a Henry Moore, with blue seas crisping to foam; now a Napier Hemy, with streaky green billows; and, anon, a Somerscales, with blue seas as broad as the eye could hold. But my memory, I knew, would only retain the impotent feeling that all these beautiful things had been in the eye, but as for recalling them, except in a vague, fumbling way, ah, here memory was paralytic. I have come across all these seas and skies again on my way to the north, and attempted by looking and longing to make memory indelible, but in vain.

IX

It is important to try to appreciate the view of the white man as to South African affairs. I mean, not the white man of the platform at home, but of the mine, the plantation, and the veldt in South Africa. To learn the burden of the white man's song, I have conversed with many, and I found a curious consensus of opinion. There is something misleading to English ears in the sound of the word, "colony." We are apt to think that a colony is inhabited by a large group of our own countrymen, under different conditions of climate no doubt, but socially and otherwise very much like our own countrymen at home. But really our South African colonists are more like armies on the march. Our colonists are in contact with partial civilization on the one hand, and with ancient savagery on the other. We have still to keep our heads by means of our hands. Lord Roberts, after his march to Pretoria, announced that the war was over, and returned home too soon. Lord Kitchener had two years' scrambling warfare after that, and tired of it, and made the peace of Vereeniging too soon. And then we thought that peace was established. Rightly looked at, the war is not over. We are still prospecting amongst a black race whose hands

are against us, and gentlemen who sit at home at ease and remember Wilberforce, and that a black man, whenever he puts his foot on the soil of England, or even upon the white deck of a British ship, is free—these gentlemen are not taking very practical views of the situation. Indeed, it would be perhaps wiser to look upon the conditions of South Africa, not as a state of happy and equal peace between fellow-citizens of a great empire, but as a state of war before the actual red eruption of battle takes place. And in war you must carry justice with a high hand and a firm hand, and one of the complaints which is made of the home government is that in its fear of a party cry at election times—the disease of which good governments die—it fails to recognize the facts to the jeopardy of our power, our preponderance, and our prestige in South Africa.

At the time of the "late" war some political Tory capital was made out of the monstrous injustice which was done by the Boer to the black man. Sentiment is a good string to play a jingo tune upon. It was said that some of their treks were made in consequence of the desire that the Dutch had to be free to whip their niggers. It is easy to set gentle blood trotting violently when such statements are made, and the trot no doubt helps to win an election, at any rate it went to the poll. But many in South Africa to-day hold strongly to the opinion that Oom Paul and his folk knew what was due to the nigger, and that we are risking much in allowing the black man to think that he is equal to the white. No white man

who knows these colonies thinks a nigger on a human level with himself. I have been surprised to find in many apparently well-disposed a hatred of the black man. They have what the Scotch call a "scunner" of the negro race. There are in many I have met deep fibres of race hatred between these men of two colours. But even when this feeling is not present in the flesh, amongst those who are kindly disposed to the careless, laughing black race, there is an inclination to treat him well, but just as well as you would treat a horse or a favourite dog; but to let the horse drive you or the dog to put a collar on you, Christianity—at any rate in South Africa—does not demand that. Now, of course, it is easy to exaggerate this aspect of the Black question. I had a conversation on board the boat, when I was on my way to South Africa, with a hard-headed, hard-mannered, rough-tongued old man, who told me he did not question the ways of Providence, but that as God had been six thousand years (he favoured some primitive views as to the process of world-making) in making the black man what he was, and hadn't in that time made him equal to the white man (here he showed a little conscious pride), it was evident that He was in no hurry to bring about equality, and he wondered why the British Parliament should make haste where Providence went slow. He wanted the black man to garden for him, to work for him, but not to be equal with him—not quite. There was an impertinent arrogance about this man that put one's temper in arms, but he was not without intelligence, and

he expressed the views of his neighbours with a freedom and contempt for the Kaffir which would have shocked some of us at home. But he had the fault of garrulity, and continued, "He did not object to missionaries teaching the blessed word of God" (here he became unctuous), "but what had they to do to come out and teach the black man that he was equal to the white, setting him above his station."

I remember a time when a poet (not of the people) was prepared that everything, "art and commerce" included, should perish, if only England's old nobility was preserved. This rough-hewn colonist took a somewhat similar view of the white man. He was inclined to teach the Christian religion so far as it inculcated humility in the blacks, but when it went on to making all men, whatever their colour, equal in the sight of God, well, then he would have stamped out missionaries. But it is useful for those who have to deal with the Colonial question to remember that these views are deep-rooted in the heads of white men in the south. It will not do to ignore these sentiments—or let us call them prejudices. It is with such stuff that wise statesmanship has to deal. As to this "stamping out," it is circumstances that make rough heels, and to those who know that we are holding our colonies by the slender sceptre of prestige, it does seem a perilous experiment to let our enemies have equal treatment with our friends. There ought, they think, to be a most favoured nation clause between citizens. But, according to some,

our magistrates are there to take the side of the blacks against the white man, and to many the ultimate results of such pampering cannot be anything but disastrous. You hear many say, "How are we to hold the colony under these circumstances? Up in Rhodesia we are a handful of white men amongst thousands of blacks. Our women and children are at the mercy of these men, who are savages after all, and if we are not to take the law into our own hands, and the Government do nothing to make the callous blacks feel its rigour, then we must 'clear out.' And what becomes of our pioneering colony then?" An intelligent man told me that this ugly aspect of the case was pressed home upon them in Bulawayo. There had been some crimes against women. The Government, treating all men as equal, I suppose, took the view that these were cases for the ordinary law. We have, as a race, a tremendous respect for the law, but the law in a mutiny on the high seas—the law, in face of rampant rebellion on land, when revolution puts its red hand upon all our institutions, is about as useful a remedy for these crying evils as a puff of human breath would be to put out the fire of London. It was the Americans in the colony who took the matter, which the limp fingers of administration were fumbling with, in stern hands, and they formed, with others, a vigilance committee, to put down rape, and they caught one of the "boys" who was guilty, and had strung him up to a tree, and would have hanged him,

but the officers of the law rescued him, and he ultimately got "ten years." Still, the action of the vigilance committee opened the sleeping eyes of Power, and a law was passed which made such crimes against women and children capital offences. That fact shows that a colony in South Africa is not just an English county separated from us by a few miles of sea. It shows that there are some knotted problems to be dealt with, and one of them is as old as the poor law, the 43rd of Elizabeth. That Statute was passed at a time when there was a plague of "lusty beggars" in the land, and it was intended to raise money from inhabitants in the parish to set the poor "to work." But in South Africa the nigger is incorrigibly lazy, and we want to discover some means by which he can be made to work. Nowhere is Carlyle's gospel of "work" more essential as practical policy than in South Africa. But here, too, if we may believe the white man's tale, the Government is too good for South Africa. There must be no forcing of the black man to work. It is a free country. If he wants to work he can come to you, and you can employ him; but you must not go out into the highways and byways and force him to come in, even by persuasion, much less by taxation. Here we have an excellent specimen of political cant. There are equal laws in England and Rhodesia, but in the one we kill for rape, and in the other we do not, because necessity is above the law. But we must not coerce the black man to work, although work would be

good for him, while the white man in England is forced to work by the most imperative of slave-drivers—hunger. But a want of logic can reconcile any incompatible propositions.

Now, the results are, these "boys" do come to work in the mines and in the towns, and get three pounds a month and three meals a week, with meat rations. They are better housed in the compound than they ever were in their kraal. They may "sign on" for three or six months, but at the end of that time they, for the most part, return to their kraals. The man is now rich. He can buy a wife for £7 or £8, and a man who has been six months in the mines can purchase a sufficient number of wives to do all the work for him, while he will lie all day under a favourite tree. Doing nothing is what he is best at. And having in his short service earned enough to keep him, with his wives' labour, for some years, he has a good time of it. Indeed, a day will come when he can sell his daughters to be the wives of other men, and drive a lucrative trade in the marriage market, where women are exchanged for cattle. Now, work, with a view merely to idleness, is a poor discipline; while work, good hard work, with some sparks of ambition to be "a kindly light," is one of the very best educations a man or a nigger (for in deference to South African opinion we must distinguish) can have. Here, too, let me note some of the cant in the arguments of those who want the black man to work for them. Here the

practical people take the weapons of sentiment and protest against the slavery to which the wives of the kraal nigger is subjected, the brutality of the sale of daughters, and the purchase of wives. But we throw away indignation upon these barbarous institutions. I believe the women are not slaves except in name, and we have all known women sold in marriage in our own country, so that that ought not to shock us.

Now this, so far as I have been able to gather, seems to be the white man's standpoint with reference to one of the great problems which have to be dealt with in the colony. One can understand that the problem may have quite another aspect in the eyes of the blacks, or in the eyes of Government officials, who have the fear of a popular or popularizing Government at home before their eyes. But, no doubt, there is some truth in the views these colonists so strongly hold. One of these in conversation illustrated his view by a story. There was an Englishman who invested his all in spans of oxen and in waggons and in stores, and he went his way accompanied by some ten or a dozen paid blacks, "right away" to the north to trade. His "all" might have been the result of long years of industry, for he had put some £2000 in the venture. The Englishman was a puny man, but with quite a towering spirit. Amongst the "boys" he had taken with him was a huge black—a contrast to him—a Zulu who had been cast in nature's largest mould. When they had left the sparse fringe of civilization, the

Englishman found that there was plotting going on amongst his followers. He was then alone in a desert with a dozen blacks, and he knew their language well enough to know that the Zulu was persuading the others in Scriptural language, "Come, let us kill him, and the inheritance will be ours." By eavesdropping, which, of course, is not thought of in civilized countries, but seems justified under the circumstances, he discovered that the proposal seemed good in their eyes. They were to kill him, divide the oxen and the carts and the stores of merchandise, to separate each man to his own kraal, and when the Englishman and his venture were quite forgotten, they could trade with these spoils. No wonder the Zulu's suggestions were well received by the blacks, but it was sorry overhearing for the enterprising Englishman. Still, he had in his little body a big spirit and a spark of true courage, and he got up from where he lay and went into the circle of conspirators and stood in front of the mountainous Zulu, and told him to get up. At first he refused, but the Englishman had a sjambok in his tight little fist, and struck at his enemy; and then the little man gave the word of command to the other conspirators to take the Zulu ringleader and tie him up to the waggon, and—so strange a thing is will—he was reluctantly obeyed, and then the puny Englishman used his sjambok until the man was half dead in his huge bulk, and the trader was as near death in his little carcass.

Of course, any one with rudimentary ideas of justice

will see how unjustifiable such conduct upon his part was—to take the law and a sjambok in his own hand. I can imagine a district magistrate being very much incensed. But he did it, and the insurrection never got a head, and the Englishman carried out his useful venture, and in time the Zulu was none the worse. The gentleman who vouched for the truth of this story (I should like to think, merely from his size, that *he* was the intrepid trader) used it to illustrate the condition of South Africa as a whole, and to point his moral, that in hostile surroundings it is necessary to govern the blacks with a strong hand, a strong command, and no mealy-mouthed talk of equality and brotherly love one to another. He said he would be as kind to a nigger as he would to a horse, and I believe him.

X

Since yesterday morning we have been in the tropics, and the passengers have gone into flannels or "ducks," indistinguishable from the men who wait at table. The sun shone on us all yesterday, and during the night the furnace breath of Africa scorched the ship. One gentleman, who thinks he is a scientist because he has a thermometer, tells me that the temperature in his cabin was 84 degrees in the night. I am not scientific, but I know that during the night a sheet seemed a tyrannous oppression. The mighty deep has been conjuring and showing us some of its wonders. Yesterday a whale "blew" about half a mile from the ship. That, in the absence of newspapers, is an event at sea. In one homeward-bound ship they did publish a paper, which they called the *Groaner*. And as they failed to reach the island of Ascension for many hours after the predicted time, some one put an advertisement in the *Groaner*, "Lost, the island of Ascension. Whoever will give information which will lead to its recovery will be handsomely rewarded"—an advertisement which gave some umbrage to the captain. But we had no newspaper on board, and had to interest ourselves in the

flying-fish which were seen hurrying away from the ship on their glistening fins. These, too, when there is no scandal, have been talked about. This morning we passed Cape Verde; a small conical hill hovered on the horizon to the east; some rocky protuberances a little further to the south; and then we came on the highway of history, for some of the vessels of the vodka-sailed Baltic Fleet were plainly visible. Had this ship been a fishing-boat, no doubt we would have been in danger. To-day is a breathless day with a grey sky, and the dim mirrors of waves are quite small, and nothing but what the Scotch call "keeking glasses," and we are to have this weather and downward stroke of light and heat all the way to the Cape, although some knowing ones have promised us some breath for expecting lungs when we get a little further south into the south-east trade-winds. A gentleman played on the notes of my fear and credulity by pointing out amongst the little waves a shark's dorsal fin, and I, although uncertain, was fain to believe him. I want, as others do, to see all the wonders of the deep.

But what can we say of the tropics, that warm belt round a paunchy world? I hear my readers complain. "Your book," they say, "tells us nothing. It does not give us the names of the passengers on board. It does not tell us how many people live in Teneriffe, or how many tons of goods are exported from Cape Colony. You do not even mention the very clever amateur conjuring of the doctor, or the dances, or the daily runs of

the vessel, or anything, and palm off on us a shark's fin or a flying-fish. It is true that you did tell us that the engine-room man had his skull fractured by the falling of a great piece of coal on it. That was interesting of course, but in the tropics you have nothing to say but to complain of the heat, and you call that originality."

Now, all this is quite true. But I remember that Walt Whitman says, "Dismiss all that insults your soul," and cricket on deck, played by flannelled—— (but I will not follow Mr. Kipling into the jungle of abuse) —played in the tropics, although it may not insult my soul, seems to me an impertinence like a shrewd whistle in church, and it is on that ground that I have purged my paper of much that might alleviate the tedium of empty days. But the tropics somehow disappoint one. The days are all fine, and generally rise and sink in glory, with not a spit of rain, not a "sough" of tempest. But this magnificence seems a little hackneyed, and I long for the changing days of more temperate skies. Here, however, the stars are punctual. But what hurts me most is the unchanging days. To-morrow will be like to-day. "All hope abandon ye who enter here," for hope lives not on unvarying favours, but upon its tearful disappointments. No open-eyed surprises. At home every to-morrow is unique—impossible, decisive; here all the days are fine. It is that that wears one down.

XI

If I remember aright, Carlyle, at the time of the war between the southern slave-holding states and the northern states of the Union, pictured the whole dispute as a quarrel between two men, one of whom insisted that the other should not hire his servant for life, while the other claimed a freedom to do as he "darned pleased." No doubt he put the fable in rugged, picturesque phrase, which I would quote if I could remember. This question as to the length of service in America led, as quite small disputes often do, to a bloody war. But the question is still with us. Servants are, in our days, hired for quite short terms, and have got their month for ever in their mouths. But such short terms of service are incompatible with certain enterprises. I believe Mr. Balfour pointed out in the House of Commons that a sailor who went a voyage to the East Indies was hired for the "all-round" voyage, which might last for three years, and that such sailor was not allowed to break his contract whenever he chose and leave his employer to his civil remedy. Indeed, it is no use for a sailor to ask to be set down halfway to Valparaiso and tell the skipper that he

can seek a remedy in the county court. The skipper's remedy is irons. But the same thing is true of a good many other kinds of labour besides that of the sailor, and that fact has been quietly recognized for years by employers and by governments. The great question everywhere in South Africa is the labour question.

We know that in Natal, a beautiful colony with skies which invite to the culture of sugar-cane, there has for years been coolie labour in the plantations, and that without it the sweet-tooths of the world would have to look elsewhere than our colony for their delight. But this coolie or indentured labour, which was essential to the industry which has helped to make Natal prosperous, was employed upon terms very similar to those upon which it was proposed quite recently to employ Chinamen in the mines on the Rand. True, the colony was small, and the coolies did not live in a compound, or what in more northern latitudes would be called a big "bothey." They were, however, bound for three years, were punishable if they attempted to escape, and in other ways were under byelaws as harassing as those which make the life of a citizen of Glasgow or Manchester a burden to him. There are thousands of these servants who have been hired for three years in Natal, and no one thought it worth his while to cry "slavery" in these days. Nor was the allegation of "slavery" urged against the British Guiana Consolidation Ordinance of 1891, or against the Trinidad Ordinance of 1901, although these were almost identical with the

Transvaal Ordinance. But great allowances are to be made for politicians who have no policy and who still desire office. The system, when looked at through non-political spectacles, seems to have been wisely devised, and to have worked well. There is only one drawback to this plan, and that is, that after the term of indentured employment the Indian coolie, being a British subject, is entitled, if he pleases, to remain in the colony; and his election in many cases to remain has given rise to another angry problem in South Africa, that concerning Asiatic invasion, of which we will have to speak hereafter.

But when, after efforts to get labour in various quarters of the world, the Colonial Office turned its eyes to China and proposed to get indentured labour from that overcrcwded land to help to work the mines, which have in their massive entrails the immediate future prosperity of South Africa, the sharpened eyes of party politicians saw a joint in the Government's harness, and the result was barren debate and foolish malediction, which made the last Session as arid and unprofitable as the great Karoo. The arguments were threadbare with the wear of time. It is easy to say that Lord Milner is run by the Johannesburg crowd. It is easy to say that the Colonial Office is in Park Lane. I have no sympathy with the over rich. I am on the side of the poor. But in the Transvaal we have a poor colony, one that was harried by war, one upon which we laid a burden of debt at the war's end

of some £35,000,000. That burden is enough to stagger any colony just getting on its feet. Not that I think that the colony should have been allowed to go without some part of the load which Britain had to bear for the sake of the integrity of the empire. But every one acquiesced at the time the burden was put upon the colony; now the question comes, How has the interest to be paid? We have all along held that a just and stable government of the Transvaal would be of inestimable benefit to the country. It was because the dice of government were loaded against our own countrymen there, because they were oppressed, and their voices were hushed for want of votes, that we made the war which resulted in annexation. These, then, were the facts. The war, just or unjust, has been made; the country, with all its future, bad or good, has been annexed. Its prosperity practically depended at that time, depends to-day, whatever it may do in the future, on one industry—gold-mining. If that prospered, the country which depended on it would prosper too. But that industry must perish if there were no hands to work the mines. The colony must dwindle into bankruptcy and decay unless the gold which lies there in the earth, sleeping, could be wakened into life; and without labour that was impossible. Before the war there were 97,800 natives working in the mines, and at the same time these gave employment to 12,413 white men. The wages paid to the blacks amounted to £334,000 per annum, and to the whites £332,620. To

bring back the old prosperity, the mines required hands. How was the labour to be obtained? Some stalwart statesmen, and amongst them one of the most important and able of the Boer leaders in South Africa—the man who is behind the undermined Dutch throne—would have made the blacks work whether they desired to do so or not. They would, to use one of their own phrases, have used a "little gentle compulsion," but not an English politician who had to face an English audience and a prowling opposition which has almost forgotten what office feels like, not one of them would have dared to suggest such a course. No, there must be no compulsion, no corvée. Nothing but the persuasion of wages.

Now, at first sight, the people at home were awakened into indignation by the idea that a government which had introduced an Aliens Bill—a bill to prevent the free entrance of undesirable foreigners into England, whose entrance "takes the children's bread and gives it to dogs"—should at the same time be introducing alien Chinese or Indian coolies into South Africa. Would not this measure deprive the white man in South Africa of labour, and would not that pass into yellow hands? This was the first catchword of politics. Any stick is good enough to beat a dog with; any cry is good enough, it would seem, to injure a political party in power, and to secure the sweets of office for one's self. This is the morality of politics. Not a high creed, it is true, but one which we are assured is essential to the great blessing of party government. Well, of course,

"the cry" had little wool with it. There was going to be no displacement of white labour; there was, in fact, going to be a replacement of white labour in the mines in consequence of the introduction of this low-class, unskilled labour of the Chinese. For every seven or eight Chinamen who displaced no other workmen, one white man would find employment in connection with the machinery or working of the mills and mines. But some urged, Why could not the mines be worked by white men? What a splendid opening if the lazy blacks were allowed to return to their kraals, and then 97,800 places could be taken by white men. Were there not 12,000,000 people in Britain on the verge of starvation? according to Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman. Here, then, was their chance. But the suggestion was simply silly. White men in the Transvaal receive in wages from £1 to £1 5*s.* a day, and at such wages the mines could not pay, and would have to be shut down. Even millionaires have to consider commercial possibilities. But could we not, without replacing Kaffir labour by white labour—could we not eke it out by white men's work? Here we come across an anomaly. It may seem very wicked, very unchristian, but white men in South Africa will not work with black. A South African in London one day got up on an omnibus in the city, and just after he was seated beside the driver, a negro clambered up at the back. "Why," said the South African, "do you carry dogs on this bus?" "Dogs, mister," answered the driver; "there

be no dogs on this bus." "Yes," said the colonist, "one got up at the back just now." The driver turned his head, and, seeing the black man, said, "Why, he be as good as you or I."

That may be the English view, but it is not the South African. The prejudice—you shall call it that—has deep roots, and white men will not work shoulder to shoulder with the black. They will not recognize the equality of man and man when their colours differ. They would regard the idea "that man and man the world o'er shall brothers be and a' that" as a lie, and however foolish this sentiment may be—a sentiment I have endeavoured elsewhere to explain—it is a fact to be reckoned with. They are oil and vinegar, and will not mix. Indeed, some men of a more philosophical turn than the rest say that our empire in South Africa must depend on the two races being kept separate and distinct—upon the English remaining the conquerors and the blacks the conquered race. They say, what may or may not be true, that Spain and Portugal have lost their position in their colonies, and have deteriorated from heroes and discoverers until they are imbeciles and beggars, by the mixture of their once fine blood, so high and proud, with the blood of those who were always low and sorning. And it is in this way that they plausibly defend the sentiment which keeps the handful of whites white, and the thousands of blacks black. It is a question of who shall have the upper hand.

At any rate, one thing is quite certain, and that is,

that as things stand it is impossible to count on white and black or piebald labour in the mines. Under these circumstances, what was to be done? The mines must be worked, otherwise the country would be bankrupt, and the race would have to clear out of South Africa. So the Government turned its eyes to China. There the labourers receive from 1*d.* to 2*d.* a day. "Chinese cheap labour" had become a byword in America. But cheap labour was a necessity to the mines if prosperity to South Africa was to be secured. Say that it would also make fortunes for some of the Johannesburg "crowd," was that a reason for saying "No, we will let the colony perish rather than allow some gentlemen with foreign names to become millionaires and make Park Lane vulgar"? That, I venture to say, would have been a foolish and vindictive attitude. It is the colony we desire to see rich, and if some astute gentlemen "scoop" in great gains in connection with that prosperity, that is not a matter to stand in the way of wise legislation. The war against capital is a foolish one, and great capitalists are a necessary evil. Without great capital the mines could not be sunk, the gold could not be got in the Rand. I think it was Bacon who said that great wealth was like manure when collected in great heaps; it did no good and was noisome, but when widely spread over the earth it did good to the land and would in time yield a bountiful harvest. Well, the cry against Park Lane was a foolish one, like all the other "cries," but the tune soon changed. It was seen that "the displacement of white labour" would not work as a policy;

it was seen that the country was not ripe for a war against capital and capitalists; but some one cleverly took from the old armoury the weapon cry of slavery, and now the sympathy of mankind was invoked for the Chinese who were to be transported from their native land, kept in a compound, deprived of their liberty, and what not. It was no use telling these people who had found this effective weapon that the Chinaman was to be well paid, and get wages six or seven times as great as he got at home; that he was to be better fed than millions of workmen who are toiling in Britain to-day, and well housed; that he was to be medically attended on the voyage, better provided on ship-board than our emigrants when they seek far lands from England; that they could, if they chose, bring wives and children with them to South Africa. All this was no answer to the cry of slavery. He was to be a slave for three years, even if at the end of that time he was sent back to China. It was pointed out that a certain amount of restraint was essential while the Chinaman was in the Transvaal, and that the introduction of large numbers of another race which were free to live and breed, to intermarry with, to underbid and undersell our own people in the markets of our colonies, was not a route which would ultimately lead to prosperity. Nothing was listened to in the hubbub of party. But the noise has subsided.[1] It is known that coolie labour of a similar indentured type

[1] Perhaps this is only to some extent true. I see that some politicians still try to resuscitate the worn-out clamour; but they are home-made politicians. Any one who knows the feelings of South Africa would take refuge in silence from that foolish clamour.

exists in other British colonies. It is known that there, as in South Africa, it has been demanded by the necessity of the case, and that there it has worked well. It is known, too, that the Special Commissioner, I think he is called, who was sent out by the *Daily Chronicle*, has reported that the foolish cry of slavery has found no echo of sympathy in South Africa. It is known, too, that the introduction of Chinese labour has even already produced colonial prosperity and the greater employment of white men in the mines. Let me give you the figures which were issued by the Mines Department on the 21st November. The total number of employees in the mining industry on the 31st October was 15,433 whites, 91,280 natives, and 12,965 Chinese, being an increase of 146 whites over September. In October 1903, 13,206 whites were employed, so that the past month shows an increase of 2227 more whites than in the same month of the previous year. Not much displacement here, I should say.

XII

To-day we are still in the tropics, but getting nearer the equator, and still under the tyrannous rays of the high sun, unmitigated by cold breezes. The sea is like glass for the first time; there are waves, but they are blunt—only sleek waves, too lazy to rise to a ridge or break into a foam frill. Even the ripples have passed away, and their places are taken by dimples. The only great disturbance is the deep furrows which the ship makes as it pushes on, furrows which seethe and whisper as they trail away to the stern. To-day, when I was sitting on a deck-chair before breakfast, the domineering old bore to whom I had come to courteous loggerheads a night or two before, came up and sat down beside me to inflict himself upon me for a time. With a forgiving spirit, he explained to me the whole theory of the main air currents and the water currents of the world. He assumed, as all bore expositors do, the entire ignorance of his hearer, and explained the whole matter to his entire satisfaction, but not in a way which would have satisfied Magnall's questions. After half an hour of this sort of thing, and presuming on my courteous acquiescence, he went on to

expound some cheap science from Lubbock about plants and insects, and even that, although I had known it from infancy, I did not resent; but, thank heaven, the breakfast bugle sounded, and I breathed again. Eating is a dull thing when the temperature is at 88° and when one has no appetite, but it is better than the second-hand science from an unmitigated bore. But it is Sunday, and that is a day for patience.

The broad mirror of ocean lets you see with distinctness the scurrying fish, which leave a trail of ripples as they fly away from the ship. Sometimes half a dozen rise at the same moment, and their level flight makes a star of disturbed surface on the sea. The flight of these "denizens of the deep," as our round-mouthed ancestors of the eighteenth century would have called them, always makes me think of the mental flights of men from the solid facts of life, the thicker medium of science, into the fine art of philosophy and poetry. Really man's mind is amphibious. It lives, for the most part, like the flying-fish, in the ocean of the real, but by the development of some of its organs—fins into wings—it is able to take short flights in the air of the ideal, although, like it, it has always, on tired wing or fin, to drop back into the sea. This in man is like Shelley's "desire of the moth for the star." Alas! that we must return and wallow. But still we have been in the "ampler ether," we have been in the high air, and the ocean is not everything; there is a sky and a heaven, and we are never the same mere swimming fish after that excursion. If not,

then as Whitman finely says, "If the grave ends us, then alarm, for we are undone."

But I complained, only a few lines back, of the oppression of a bore, and here I am imitating him unmercifully. Better take an example and explain the simple things I see, and, of all the things I see, by far the most interesting is the heavens. Let me, like the flying-fish, take a short excursion in the air, and say a word about the clouds which I see all day long. I have never seen such an uninvaded heaven before. Usually we see a strip of sky with great clefts taken out of it by the aggressing hills, or a mere ribbon of firmament between stiff, curtailing houses. But here the sky is all the universe—the changing canopy of a wavy sea. Indeed, it is the waves and the lights which they hold in their hands which make the sea what it is. Under the blackness the sea is dark, sullen, repellent, and its depths speak terror to the soul. When the clouds are drawn aside and the uninterrupted sun shines on the sea, the ocean is tossing glory. A grey above is faithfully reflected in pearls below, and the shadow of these high clouds now falls in regal purple islands, round which glistening lagoons of light are painted on the sea as the sun peeps round the fleecy corners of these sailing hills in air. At the close of day in grand scrolls the clouds are stretched in the west, some of them solemn blue, some of them gentle gold, and some of them strident scarlet.

But we have to look back and see who shifts the

scenes, and we used to think, not unnaturally, that it was all done by the winds, which were always dressing and undressing the sky, as a child dresses and undresses its doll. It was the viewless winds that made our views. It was these nurses, the breezes, which dandled all the long-clothed clouds in their arms and made one's days dull and grey, but which also made the vistas in skyland which capture the eye and lead the imagination. All this seemed clear enough. But there are other agents at work besides these easy explanations, the winds. It was long ago shown that the condensation of drops of water from air saturated with aqueous vapour, was often brought about by particles of dust. I can imagine Johannesburg "perk up" at that news. It seemed odd, no doubt, that dust could bring rain, and in the old days many divines would have found a special providence in this arrangement. He sent the dust, but he sent the water-cart also. Tempering the wind to the shorn lamb is not more beneficent than making dust the cause of the rain which is to lay that ghost of an arid land or a dry road. It was, however, quite certain that in the absence of dust considerable supersaturation of air could be attained before condensation began. Each particle of dust, it seems, forms a nucleus round which the molecules of water collect, and when the drops have become of sufficient size they fall and carry down with them the dust particles as well. It has long been a common belief that showers wash the atmosphere, and it is true that in this way the air is

freed from the presence of dust and tired beings live after a shower of rain. There is another common or vulgar error, as Sir Thomas Browne would have called it, extant, in the belief that the firing of guns in battle cause, by the noise they make, rains. There is some foundation for this belief, and to my thinking it is probably to be found in the fact that the guns not only make a noise, but throw into the atmosphere a great deal of charcoal dust, and that that has the same effect on a wet atmosphere as the sand I have been referring to. But I am becoming as pedantic as the passenger on board who had a thermometer. It is not only rain-clouds that make our heavens, but the high atmospheric dust is as important a colouring material in nature's paint-box as the water mists of which we know so much in our humid days. Many people will remember a year of red sunsets. It is long gone now, and that only because the volcanic dust of Krakatoa has had time to fall, because the atmosphere has been whitewashed by rains, and our skies have returned to the Quaker uniforms of soberer days.

But the wonders of the sky are growing upon us. Not only have the rain-drops a core of dust, but if we get air which has been freed from all such nuclei, and we allow the air to be played upon by Röntgen rays or other ionizing agency, a dense cloud is at once formed in the wet air. If, on the other hand, there are no ions, then there is no cloud. It would seem, then, that electric ions can also be the nuclei of rain-drops, the cause of

clouds, one of the great agencies in making one's skies what we know them, and as I have seen them for many companionable days over this great Atlantic.

But I am probably doing to you what the gentleman on board did to me before breakfast. I am boring you by telling you things you know. Well, my excuse must be my intercourse with these great galleons of the air for the past week. I have seen them sail over a lone sea. I have seen them crowd in their fleets till it darkened. I have seen them shine as Moses' face did. I have seen them scatter into a great empty heaven. They have dominated my days, these clouds, in the bright hours, and that must be my lame excuse. But the breakfast bugle relieved me from the conversational clutches of my bore. I will, like Macklin, who when he wanted to tell his famous story of a gun, feigned to hear a gun, and then said, "Speaking of guns, that reminds me," and then he told his story—I will feign to hear the breakfast bugle.

XIII

Oh, the incessant sea! We are over the equator, and the round horizon hems us in with indomitable beauty. The waves to-day are blue under a blue sky, with a sun overhead, but below them is the gentle violence of a summer's breeze, which blows the tops off the waves into rainbows. When we were passing near Africa, but still with many glistening miles of sea between us and the hot coast, an insect, bright green, with gossamer wings and grasshopper-like legs, was blown to us, and alighted on the deck for a few resting moments. This insect—one of the *mantidæ,* or *mantis religiosa,* as a learned one amongst us, with pardonable ostentation, informed us—is known as the Hottentot god, and I have heard that, from its genuflective legs, the French have called it the *Prie dieu* insect. It was a' pleasant, sudden message from the shore, but another puff of wind sent it on its staggering journey. We had the same day another curious visitant from the hidden continent, as curious in its way as a message sent by Hertzean waves, and perhaps capable of similar uses in the future. We were, as I say, many miles from land—indeed, Africa was buried in the sea; but its hot breath came curling

over the waves, and sought out its own. One amongst us, who had suffered in Rhodesia from malarial fever, was touched by it, and his old disease, as if by a miracle, came back to him, as if by the touch of a breath it was recalled from the memory of the flesh. His temperature was 103°, and he did not leave his cabin for three days. If the bright insect was the Hottentot god, surely this was the Hottentot devil! One sees possibilities in this which may throw the Marconigraph into the shade. Perhaps the god and devil were to speak learnedly, "allied species," for is not malarial fever probably caused by an insect bite? At any rate, here was the sharp reminiscence of that painful experience.

We are now in seas alive with flying-fish, those swallows of the great deep; and yet there is a consciousness, too, that underneath our keel, on either side of us, the hungry waves are only the glistening wigwams of a hungrier voracity than their own—the voracity of sharks. The consciousness of the yearning greed of these as one lies in one's berth and thinks of the deep, dark fathoms which are beneath, gives one a creeping sensation of fear, which is quite foreign to this great floating hotel, where the evening hours are passed with "flying feet;" where the band discourses the music of the halls, and the day is loaded with heavy meals which break the heavier leisure. To many on board the strange dishes, the southern fruits which are served to them, are the most interesting experience of the voyage. Their geography lies in their palates; but I may be wrong. Perhaps they

are not as greedy as the sharks; but the players at bridge, progressive whist, the daily gamblers on the ship's run, these show an avidity for gain which takes one back to shore again. The Stock Exchange, it would seem, suffers from no *maladie de mer*, and is always with us. I found it again in Johannesburg "going strong." Will this vulgar voyage never end? It is the people make me petulant. I have kept my temper very well until now; but it is the sea and the sky, the albatrosses on their two scythe-like wings, with which they seem to mow the air, that have kept me in a good humour, not the music of the band, the rubber quoits, the deck sports, and the fancy dress ball. I go to my cabin, and have these sounds of revelry pelted at me through a door.

XIV

Every church tower would be a spire if it could, and Salisbury Cathedral shows the successful issue of the tower's ambition. I am convinced that Table Mountain, which is a tower of a hill, would have been a spire of a hill, like the Devil's Peak, if it could. It is striking, but unfinished. If I remember aright, Ruskin pointed out that the true type of the leaf ended in a point, and was angry with the leaf of the tulip tree because it was a web-footed leaf, broadly diverted from the true type. To my mind, a blunt mountain is an anomaly, and there are crowds of them in South Africa. But when I have made this complaint of the rock which towers into the clear sky above Cape Town, I have done, and I have to admit that the land, as seen from Table Bay, although more like the heft of a hill than the blade, is impressive. It was the first land we had seen for ten watery days, and "such a stranger" seen again had a friendly look. We had had excellent weather, but you tire of weather when you have nothing else but that and meals. I could, if the land of South Africa had only been England—I could, like Brutus in Tarquin's time, have stumbled and fallen and kissed my mother earth. But although it was

land, and human at that, it was what the Scotch call "fremdt" or "stranger" land to me. So, instead of stumbling, which might have been misconstrued, I looked at it through my field-glasses, and saw to perfection in the morning light this snub-nosed mountain and the two Roman noses beside it, which dominate the bay. Perhaps this truncated mountain looks more so because of the sharp peaks of the Lion's Head and the Devil's Peak, which are in close contrast with it. These are hills, if you like, invading heaven with aggressive points. But the little range is fine as a whole, with the green herbage scaling the mountain-side, with its bare precipices at a higher range, and with all its details bulging on the eye through the clear air of Africa. If Africa is to a large extent a rock and a stone-heap of sparsely clad veldt, it is blessed with an air and a sky which is not earthly, but heavenly. The air annihilates distance as does a telescope. It brings beautiful bluish or gentle pink mountains which are fifty miles away from you, over the red, earthy veldt, with its stunted karoo bushes, close to you, so that you can trace the features and the wrinkles on the stony faces of these sphinxes. And so this intimacy of the bluff Table Mountain and its two aerial sentinels seemed to put out of existence the four or five miles which divided us. It was a beautiful, calm, sweet dawn when we approached the dock, and the white houses of the town made their way into the morning light. We went slowly, with our great floating bulk, into the dock, which gave my eyes time to ramble all over the Table Mountain and

up the wooded slopes of the Devil's Peak. But after creeping through the gull-frequented waters, we came into the dock and alongside the quay. Ah, then came, as they always come, meetings and partings! Bright smiles of recognition and of welcome after a time of weary widowed eyes. But there were partings too, and some lids went in the red direction of tears. I saw one gentleman who recognized his son in four different persons, so bad was his sight, but so eager was his heart. I liked him for his pretty mistakes. But soon the world of business routed the world of feeling. There was the luggage to be looked after, the emigration officer to interview, and what not. The stewards, deck, cabin, and bath, were all there with alert eyes and obsequious palms, as greedy as the cormorants in the dock were for the mullet.

XV

I HEARD that a gentleman had been asking for me, and after some search I found him. He was an able, intelligent man, with the slightest flavour of "American" in his talk. It was not unpleasant that sound—a little taste of onion in salad. Ah, how it takes from the insipid monotony! So it was with his slight American accent. He told me that he had, "by directions," come down from Johannesburg to meet me, and that he had a saloon car at the station, which was to be attached, if I saw no objection, to the evening train that night to take me the 1049 miles which lie arid and dusty between Cape Town and Johannesburg. And he proposed that, when I was disposed, we might proceed to the car and talk over our business there. All this was exceedingly well thought of, even beyond the courtesy which one had a right to expect. To proceed through Africa with the luxury which attends a millionaire, had been far beyond my expectations. But here luxury was to my hand, and I took it. We spent the whole forenoon in the car on a siding at the Cape Town station, with papers on the table of the saloon, and flies everywhere. The saloon was a large and comfortable one, and the

bedrooms connected with it looked inviting even in the heat of the day. The kitchen, too, was commodious, and the black cook and the white waiter, with its help, did good work on our journey up, as also did the bathroom, a luxury beyond our daring hopes. After working from nine to twelve, we went to see something of Cape Town on our way to the Mount Nelson Hotel to lunch. Cape Town did not impress me favourably, although its position between the Devil ('s Peak) and the deep sea is magnificent. It is a tawdry town. There is no art in its streets, as there is everywhere in Funchal. The buildings are bad echoes of England's poorest architecture, and have business pretentiousness on their stone and stucco faces. There is also an air of slovenliness in the town which goes ill with its pretentiousness. I liked to see the blacks and Malays and Cape boys about. Here, it seemed, I was coming face to face with "the problem." Plays are nothing nowadays unless there is a problem fly in the amber of dialogue, and so a book of travels in South Africa would be nothing if it had not a problem too. But the immediate problem was lunch at the Mount Nelson, and there was nothing tawdry about that. The Cape soles were as good as those off the Dogger Bank; indeed, the hotel is an excellent English hotel in a sub-tropical garden. But my American friend and guide was not content with a saloon car for Johannesburg; he had two motors at the door of the Mount Nelson Hotel at two o'clock, and we started on one of the most beautiful and varied drives that

motor-cars ever went. First along the Victoria Road, then over a convict-made road by the sea at the foot of great hills of the Table Mountain architecture. On the shore were some huge rocks, over which the waves were breaking in a hundred rockets of spume. Then we wound through a valley in the peaked hills, and came, after passing a sort of dazzling white sand on the hill-side, to Houts Bay, where the sea had come a long way to tryst with us. Here we turned and went through a valley, clambered up a high pass, and then came down a sloping valley on the other or eastern side. Before us were stretched great chains of mountains. These were the picturesque mountains which lie behind Wellington and Lady Grey, and in the afternoon light their fantastic peaks had a beauty which is seldom seen on sea or shore.

In the valley which we were descending to Constantia, there was a small forest of ghosts of trees (they call them the silver leaf), but they are white by day, and would horribly shake our dispositions if seen in the glimpses of the moon. We then ran through shady groves through the beautiful suburb of Wynburg, past villas with their beautiful gardens, and then back alongside the tramway lines to Cape Town. We had been about thirty-three miles in about two and a half to two and three-quarter hours, and the black who drove the old Panhard in which I was, had driven well and with excellent discretion. My first look at the black problem was prepossessing. I have seen dozens

of French drivers who could not drive half as well as this black boy.

It is no use attempting to give you an idea of the landscape which hurried past us as the miles flew under our wheels. The hills were like Salisbury Crags upon the top of Salisbury Crags, and more on the top of that, and between these tablelands some airy peak which in the cold clear heavens met the sun on even terms. Every scene was different, and each was beautiful in its way. But I think it was the lavish growth of flowers that struck me most. It is the beginning that is the best of summer, and there did not seem to be a flower that had not come to the meeting. The pelargoniums were in purple bushes. What we used to call the African lily, with its lop-sided white flower and green leaves (they call it "arum" now), was making light in every shady place. But it is impossible to enumerate them. I do not know their names. I felt their beautiful presence. I saw brooms with blue flowers; flowers like everlastings, but everywhere yellows, pinks, and purples, in the most beautiful garden mosaic. I had seen, of course, some of these flowers in England, but now it was not the stiff hand of the gardener who had done the planting, is was not a grudging climate which did the growing. It was the royal hand of Nature at her best that had sown, and gracious skies that had grown, this garden fair. I resented the motor-car then. I should have liked to wander with the flowers up and down

the hill-sides, to talk with them, to dally with them, to establish an intimacy with them (I am on good terms with primroses and cowslips at home). But instead of spending a long holiday with them—not merely to know their names, that is a small thing, but to know them, which is a great thing—I was hurried past them all, and left a whirl of dust to mark where we had been. You see, the saloon car was to be attached to the train leaving Cape Town at nine that night. There was much to be done before that, and there was no time for philandering with wild flowers, and we had to pack all our delights into a few short hours, which is as difficult as it is to get all you want into a cabin trunk. So back we came. I am unwilling to say a word against Africa after that drive; when it had greeted me with summer flowers, it deserves the best I can say of it. But the dust, not only motor-car dust, but Cape dust! For an hour I loathed myself; but water redeemed me and gave me back my self-respect, and we had tea in the saloon of the car, to which by this time a thousand flies had invited themselves. They were not welcome guests. After that we went back to the Mount Nelson Hotel, had an excellent dinner, with fresh strawberries—they were, I think, fresher and sweeter because it was November. It is thus that imagination controls the palate. We spent a little time in the darkening garden, and then walked back under the full moon to the station. It was a day that deserves a chapter.

XVI

When we were lunching at the Mount Nelson we saw Doctor Jim, the Premier of Cape Colony and the hero of a fiasco. That circumstance made me think of politics. When it was proposed to give responsible government to Cape Colony, some far-seeing wise men warned us against that leap in the dark. Some said that Great Britain was by her liberal policy paving the way to Dutch supremacy in the colony, and ultimately to civil war. These prophecies have been proved to a large extent true. The civil war in Cape Colony was worse than the war in the Orange River Colony or the Transvaal, because it was smouldering, and, according to many I have spoken with, the red fire is still in the embers of Dutch hate. In the north it was fair open war, and the Boers knew that they were beaten, and even, it is said, respect the British. In Cape Colony there are many of the Dutch who think and bear themselves as if they had been the conquerors, and all our clemency, our repatriation, and the rest of our eager conciliations, are regarded as the indemnity we paid for the peace we so much desired. They talk about peace, but there is no peace. In Cape Colony the rebellion which was in men's hearts never

came to a real head, and never had that head been bruised by the iron heel of war. More's the pity. We have to-day a hostile camp within our lines. The aspirations of the Bond are the same that instigated their disloyalty—they dream of Dutch supremacy in South Africa, and see their way to achieve it by votes, the swords of peace, instead of the swords of war. In this colony war has not ceased, although it never began. The smouldering hate of our rule continues. It is true that at the last election the Progressives, the party that stands for England, obtained a small majority, partly owing to the black vote. But the war will be waged again. A black vote is a fickle weapon to rely upon, but we have given the niggers votes for some time-serving purpose. And if the Bond succeeded in weaning these black children from the Progressive party, the future of Cape Colony would be as black as its voters. It is true that the black vote is, I understand, on an educated franchise. The nigger must be able to sign his name, and must have an income. These are our safeguards. To me the future of a state where rebellion is on the boil does not seem promising. I see that the policy of the Prime Minister of the colony is Progressive, as it must be. He proposes to deal in the next session of Parliament with education and with agriculture. He is a bold man, none can doubt; but here he has taken in hand a nettle and a thistle—politics with a vengeance.

XVII

At nine we left Cape Town. The moon gave light enough to make everything beautiful, but did not give enough light to see by. But I was warned before I went to bed that I should, if possible, see the Hex River, and by some good luck I wakened from a wearied sleep before the train reached Worcester, and saw the gigantic scenery as well as the feeble moonlight would let me. It was impressive, and left a deep if blurred impression on memory. The recollection lives with me now in feeling, as do some of Mr. Peppercorn's pictures, which depend for their success upon masses of light and shade, and not upon a niggling fretwork of many colours. But I saw just enough to make me wish to see more. My appetite was whetted, not satisfied. So after a time I pulled up the dust-shutter, and let the lids fall upon eyes wearied with delights and fell asleep. When I wakened in the morning there was an unsmudged day over the veldt, which was covered with karoo bushes and some other stunted growths of more vivid greens and yellows. But all the herbage grows in tufts, and the red or yellow earth shows everywhere between the bushes; even these, when

seen with level eye, makes the plain look full of vegetation to where the hills and kopjes lift their barrenness into the view. I lay in my bed and looked at the beauty of the scene; for it had a beauty, even where the stretch of unvarying veldt is bounded by some brown kopje. But when, as in the forenoon, the view of the browned earth and the grey-green bushes which grow on it for a distance of some forty or fifty miles on either hand was ended to the south-east by a congeries of rugged mountains, many of them flat like Table Mountain, many of them as peaked as a rhinoceros horn, with beautiful lights upon them, which are only lined into prominence by the delicate shadows which are thrown by a high sun down their steep declivities, the view was magnificent. All day long the foreground was golden dust, but the sky was blue, and the hills fretted the sky with their rugged peaks and ridges. Scenery? Yes, there were miles of scenery, leagues of scenery. Faded yellow plains and brown kopjes, sometimes with flat tops, and their stone ribs showing, sometimes pointed like the boss on a shield. And this for days. Sometimes a homestead, with its willows and poplars and green trees, blesses the veldt-wearied eye for a short season, but then again comes the great plain, the arid stretches, and the threadbare hills. To live in such a place, as an Irishman might say, would mean suicide. But if you are a true Dutchman, and monotony suits you, this, with sufficient sjamboked black labour and a

shady stoep to smoke upon, is paradise—for remember the sky is over all, and it's "all right with the world." But the day, notwithstanding the dun sameness of its hours, was full of wonders, which delighted such novices in the veldt as I am. The colour of the kopjes—there were as many colours as the language has names for—sometimes they were deep and sombre red, sometimes bright chrome yellow. In the evening, until the sun sank, many of them were orange tawny, some aureolin, and some had a pink flush as if the stones were blushing. But when the sun went, then royal purple hung on their rugged shoulders, deepening into warm blue, and ultimately into frigid blue, before the blackness came and the stars of the Southern Cross looked out. It is wonderful what curious results a conspiracy of bare rocks or heaps of stones and sunshine can produce. Seen from afar, the sun's rays on these bare brazen fronts have an exquisite beauty. No one, until he has seen South Africa, can imagine how exquisite a sun-lighted stone wall can be. It was the Shunammite that cried, "See, the sun hath looked upon me;" and Africa is always proclaiming the same fact in the beauty of its colour and the splendours of its barrenness. To-day I have seen hills brown, but grained with darker shadows; sometimes hills of solemn blue, but with gentler azure ranges further off. This was monotony, and yet no monotony. The sea of hills was like the ocean, always the same and always different.

But again the mirages delighted me. I had heard of them, but my scepticism had made me chary of belief. But there they were great lakes on the flat horizon, with sometimes paynes-grey promontories and islands in them. Oh, how the imagination, like books, delights the eye! I felt sea-breezes coming from the hard desert. But the day was full of other incidents. We saw blockhouses, and the ruins of blockhouses—the old clenched fists of war. They were, as I said before, the ingenious invention of the British, who had been beaten in mobility. The slim Boer slipped through our slow fingers. He did not ask more than "biltong." Tommy Atkins wanted tinned meats. And, as a fact, they were too ubiquitous for us. A game of hide-and-seek in war palled upon us. In masses the Boers could not stand against us; in lightness we were over-matched. So the block-houses and the barbed wire were invented to clip the Boer's wings and deprive him of mobility. And there they are for monuments.

One word about the war. If the Boers had been as good at the other arts of war as they were at their quick journeys and nimble disappearances, they would have made us pay dearly for our tardy victory. But the Boers excel in repose. They reposed round Mafe-king. They reposed outside Kimberley. They might have taken Ladysmith if they had had generals. All this is in curious contrast to our own proceedings—with Sir Redvers Buller, so careful of his men that he threw away guns and battle. The Japanese might have

taught him that the art of war is not philanthropy. Lord Roberts, with his great massive march to Pretoria, which ended a war which had not begun. And Lord Kitchener's excellent organization to find needles in carts of hay. It was a war of cross-purposes, and the honours —there were very few of them—were "easy."

But my journey. We saw many little graveyards with crosses over the places where Englishmen lay. But these were sad sights. That day, too, we passed several ostrich farms, and saw those curious birds which are all bustle and no skirt.

There were only 80 domestic ostriches in the year 1865; but in the year 1897 there were no fewer than 237,000 of these birds in captivity. In 1880 there was a boom in ostriches. As much as £200 was often given for a pair of birds; and a very fine pair has been known to fetch £1000. Ostrich feathers are worth about £4 6*s.* 2*d.* a pound; and in 1882, when the price was at its highest, the feathers realized £1,093,989 for the colony. Birds have been known to live fifty-five years, and a bird may realize for its owner £25 each plucking in good seasons, when the price is high. To its shame, be it said, that ostrich feathers is one of the few significant exports of South Africa. A set of colonies where mealies grow like weeds without irrigation, still imports mealies. A country where fruit grows with as little care as in California, does not export canned fruits. Goat's hair and feathers and gold and diamonds, these are its staple

exports. But in the old schoolboy rhyme, if my memory serves me, it ran—

> "The rule of three
> It puzzles me,
> And practice drives me mad."

Statistics have the same effect upon me as practice had on that sluggard urchin.

But my travels. One thing must not be forgotten—we had seen little whirlwinds made visible by dust passing over the dry land watered by dry spruits. But at one place we encountered a real dust storm. The atmosphere was not air, but dust. One breathed gritty dust. One could not see the houses of the guerilla towns for dust. It penetrated everywhere. If I remember aright, a distinguished surgeon who visited South Africa during the war, spoke only of two plagues—women and flies. He must have been a man of superficial observation, as he did not add—dust. All that Africa wants to make it a garden is floods. If nature, when it made the Witwatersrand, had, instead of stopping short at the height of 6000 feet above sea-level, pushed the ridge up another 6000 or 7000 feet, so that its golden head might have been crowned with perpetual snow—had this happened, and had the waters, white waters, from these high snows poured down in perennial streams, making water furrows the whole way to the sea, the aspect of that great continent would have been very different to-day. It is possible that the gold mines would have been more difficult to discover

and to work, but veins of water which would have been all over the land with their rich deposits of soil would have made Africa—which is a desert—a garden; and in the garden, ah, there would have been a people very different from the motley riff-raff crowd which lives to-day in Johannesburg. But it is no use crying over spilt milk, or over unspilt water.

XVIII

Pictures of travel in South Africa would be very incomplete if they did not include a sketch in black and white (mostly black) of the native. But it would be an error in the other direction if a veracious writer were to give an elaborate history of the Bantu race, however little, want of knowledge might stand in his way. The native is not by any means a noble savage. He is a liar. But here he is not superior to the Boer, who has a Dutch saying well implanted in his conscience, and acts upon it. "Am I," says this proverbial wisdom, "the slave of my word?" This is noble freedom. The native of South Africa is not the slave of his word any more than his Dutch neighbour. It would be easy to prove that assertion by quite a number of interesting instances. Not that he is the only liar in the world, but most liars use the untruth as "a very present help in time of trouble;" the Kaffir uses it on all occasions. He is, too, devoid of gratitude, and in that he ranks below the dog. To secure his respect you must rule him, and here he is on a level with the dog. To be kind to him is to earn his contempt. I am not saying that in all other respects he is unique,

but these are his salient traits. Although he has a fine past of savagery behind him, which might justify atrocities, he is not very vindictive; indeed, he has a good deal of rare good humour in him. He is always showing his teeth on the grin. He has great affection for his young. It is true, as we have seen, that he sells the female children to be wives and beasts of burden when they grow up, under a practice called *sobola;* but that, in the opinion of many, is more laudable than it seems. The wives, when sold, although they work hard, are not the slaves which it suits some interested persons, who play upon home sentiment, to depict them; and, indeed, that they work hard, carry water, and till the land, is the one excellent feature of native life. If the men—who, now that they are not allowed to fight, only loaf—were only made to labour too, like the women, there would be more hope for the future of the black races than is to be looked for from the missionary efforts which are instigated at home—efforts which are not to be judged by results amongst the natives, but by some excellent results in those who support the missions, with their dark satellites, the hypocritical "mission boys." The curse of the black is his laziness; it is, perhaps, the curse of the white man too. In the old days the native men had to work at the great trade of war, and the women "minded the house" or the hut. Now, like certain warrior ants, they have got too lazy in these piping times of peace to feed themselves and clean themselves—not that the latter

ever was a passion with the natives; and you can see them sleeping while the locusts raid their crops, and we are told that they will not take the trouble to climb a tree to get the fruit which nature holds to their hands for the pulling, but that with characteristic improvidence they will cut down the tree. It would seem that nature had been too prodigal in her gifts to these, with this fertile soil and good-humoured climate, and has made the men idlers. They live from hand to mouth, and there is no room between these for the making of character. Their religion seems to be a crude form of ancestor worship, and if their ancestors were like themselves it is not a high creed. But they have their ghosts, and the witch-doctor is really an important person in their dishevelled polity. He divines by "throwing the bones," which seems to be on a par of superstition with our own "divining rod," in which all the people who sat at my table on the voyage to the Cape fervently believed. Now, what is to be the future of this raw savage, whose intellect is often as sharp as a needle, and whose conscience is as blunt as Table Mountain? Is he to be treated as a child and governed, or as a man, and given a vote? One thing, as I have hinted, seems certain, and that is, that our missionaries make little way with them. You can induce most people—except the people of Johannesburg—to go to church, but it is more difficult to make Christians of them. That is evident after eighteen hundred years of experiment. Perhaps the error in South African missions is that our pioneers of religion have begun at the wrong end. It

takes some imagination to make a man a Christian, and only takes a little cunning to make a black man a "mission boy." But is not religion the flower of the plant of life, and must not the plant grow through a laborious spring, before, in the full summer, it can put out its grateful blossoms? Ought we not to try first of all to make the Kaffir a man, before we attempt the further development? As I think Bishop Gaul of Mashonaland said, "Necessity comes before choice, 'must' comes before ought, and work for a living before working for a liking." I think, too, he was right when he said that the problem before us is "to create such conditions, such wants, as shall induce a natural necessity—such a necessity, in fact, as shall practically force every able-bodied lad and man in the country to earn his own living and the living of his family." I don't know whether this is orthodox doctrine, but it sounds like practical common sense, and that from a bishop! A missionary who will make the black man work, who will bring to him a destiny of toil instead of a destiny of idleness, will do more for the race than the one who begins with hymns and doctrines which make the black man strut. That the black man can work well is not to be questioned; that he must be made to work, if you will reclaim him from savagery and idleness, seems to be a doctrine which is worth the practical experiment of trying. The African to-day, whatever he may be in the future, is a little child, and must be led. To give them votes because they are men, to allow a black majority to

rule Africa, is not a proposition which commends itself to the common sense that has been half an hour in South Africa. It is a policy that would be resisted with force by a white South Africa. It is true we have put this chopping-stick (votes) in the hands of the black fists of Cape Colony. It is a hazardous experiment, even although it has served the English party in its hour of need. But Britain is so enamoured of its own institutions, it is so flattered by being called the Mother of Parliaments, that it will thrust its own institutions down the throats of colonies, whether the dose is suited to their complaint or not. Logic is a fine instrument, but it must be used with discretion, and that is a precept England never remembers. There is one curious trait about the black man, which may exist in fact, but certainly exists in the minds of many white observers. If I remember aright, it was Shylock who asked, "If you cut us (the Jews), do we not bleed?" And the answer would seem to be, certainly; but in the case of the blacks the theory is that they don't feel. You will hear instances of black boys sitting up as interested spectators of operations on their own legs or feet. There is, however, a similar belief in children who pluck off the wings of flies, that they don't feel, and I have some doubt about the well-foundedness of either theory. One thing might be argued in favour of the view, and that is that pain is not felt unless you go halfway to meet it, and that it is those who have the most sensitive imaginations that suffer most. It is imagination that is the "quick" of life.

The blacks are not, it would seem, largely endued with that painful gift which looks "before and after," and "sighs for what is not," and in that way they may be protected from throes which white flesh feels, may be as callous as some say they are. But as against this convenient theory, which is a salve to consciences which recognize the black man only as an animal with an immortal soul, it is to be remembered that the blacks fall victims to diseases that the white man struggles through. They succumb at once, and give up the ghost before the time, while an Englishman will make a fight for life, and will not be worsted by disease. I give these observations, which have not been made by me, for what they are worth.

There is one lesson which our teachers, generally self-appointed, are never tired of inculcating, and that is the wholesome lesson of content. It is quite true that it may become some to have ambitions, but for most ordinary men it is wise to be content with that position in life in which it has pleased God to place them. Such a sentiment reeks of the Sunday school. But when we find the blacks enjoying their ease without dignity, we preach quite a different sermon. He is content; he earned a good deal from our over-paying Government in the war; he goes to the mines and earns a good wage; he does, in most cases, more work than a white man can—although some folk will not have it so—his wants are few, and he returns to his land and his kraal with his small hoard, buys some wives, and sets us

an example of lazy contentment which it is hard to imitate. But that policy of the black man does not suit the white. He leaves the mine just when he is becoming thoroughly useful, and as many of the blacks are in this unambitious frame of mind, the mine is left short-handed. This will never do. What we have to manage somehow is to purge the black man of his contentment; to give him wants, desires; to put in him the seeds of hungry ambition which will make him learn to labour and to wait. The benefactors of the world, I think, Landor said, "were those who were dissatisfied." This, then, is the logical resort of those who would make the natives useful by persuasion; but there are many who hold bolder views, and would make them useful to themselves, to employers, and to the community by compulsion. I think in this last matter, if in no other, there is an agreement of harsh opinion between certain Boer leaders, like Botha, Smuts, De la Rey, and Cronje, and certain of the captains of industry who work the mines. Of course, such sentiments shock people who live at home at ease and do not know the idle black man. What! force a British subject to work, whether he desires to or not, and that in the interest of certain capitalists or Rand lords whose sole desire is to make large dividends? Put it so, it looks indefensible enough. But there is another aspect of the question. It is true we have quite inordinate veneration for certain stock phrases which have done service as banners in the past. "Liberty of the subject" is one of these; "Britons never,

never shall be slaves" is another that flourishes in song. I fear that "Free trade" is another venerated rag. But with calmer eyes we see that there are other principles of government than these. We don't respect the liberty of the subject in the case of the criminal whose hands are furtive or whose methods, force. But that, of course, is because society must be protected against such enemies. Quite true. But there are quite other enemies of society than these highwaymen and robbers. We have, in recent years, come to the conclusion that ignorance is an enemy of society, and we have set ourselves to remedy this object by setting aside the liberty of the subject, and by compulson making education a necessity. Children are no longer allowed to wallow in spacious ignorance. They are made to learn. Parents are no longer allowed to neglect the duty which they owe to their offspring.

Again, in other countries than our own the safety of the State makes compulsory military service a necessity, and even in Britain such a system of defence has had the approval of a Royal Commission. If we can get along without compulsory military service it will be well, but certain untoward circumstances might make us have recourse to that method of defence to-morrow, the which then would be another big nail in the coffin of that dead doctrine the "liberty of the subject."

Now, there are apologists for forced labour in South Africa who would tell you that ignorance is not a greater enemy of the State, than the black laziness which

we have been whitewashing with the fine name of contentment. These men, we are told, are improvident, and do not have an eye on to-morrow; and when their gains are spent, when the starvation they have invited sits down at the bare board with them, they have to depend upon the Government for support. But such men, we learn, are not only an injury to themselves; they are a danger to the State that harbours and protects them, they are a menace to the polity of our Colonial Empire. Here again, we are urged, the liberty of the subject is an absurd and atrophying doctrine, and the black man should be made to labour. We have an example, too, under somewhat similar circumstances before our eyes. Germany has the same kind of human material to deal with in East Africa as we have in the south of the continent, and Count Goetzen, the Governor, not long ago informed the Berlin Colonial Society of an interesting experiment he had made. The experiment was nothing but forcing the natives to work a certain number of days in the year on certain village fields, the proceeds of such labour, like "all Gaul," being divided into three parts, one of which went to the headman, one to the villagers, and one to the Commune of Dar es Salaam.

Now, it would at the present juncture require a strong colonial minister, an iron Government, to propose to introduce the corvée into South Africa. However popular he might be in the colony, the British public is not prepared to adopt slavery as a policy. It is quite true

that this is an attitude of cant, but ministers must shape their sails to the wind of sentiment; and the vehemence of the feeling that we must leave men free to do as they like, even when their doings are to some extent inimical to society, is so strong that it must be reckoned with. It is not a little curious to look at the past history of this sentiment. Quite long ago, in 1811, the sentiment came to a head. There were all sorts of sensational rumours in England as to the way the blacks in South Africa were treated by the whites. The London Missionary Society said the treatment was inhuman. As many as one hundred murders had been committed in the Uitenhage district alone. Inquiry was called for, and took place. Over fifty-eight colonials, mainly of Dutch extraction, had to stand their trial, and, after a hearing which extended over four months, after many witnesses, black and white, had been examined, the two judges found there was no foundation for by far the greater number of the charges made. No doubt some of the colonials may have been cruel, no doubt some compulsion was put upon the blacks, but, as I say, the verdict all round was, Not guilty. But this over-sensitive attitude of the folk at home led to results—results which ought to be a warning. These colonials of Dutch extraction were dissatisfied. They came to the slow conclusion that the Government was on the side of black idleness, of native supremacy. This resulted in the great trek, and that was the beginning of a great chapter in recent history. The colonists desired to deal

with their own labour questions without the interference of Downing Street, hounded on to action by the Aborigines' Protection Society. They were the dominant race in South Africa, they thought they knew the black and the black problem, and they knew that Downing Street and its prompters did not. There was nothing for it, they must clear out, and with their flocks and their herds they went north and founded a new country, where they were—in the phrase of obloquy which we used to justify the war—free to whip their niggers. All might have been well with them had they not lighted upon lands which had gold in their slanting reefs. Even then, if the Dutch had kept the mining industry in their own hands, things might have gone well with them. But these folk of Dutch extraction were lazy; they were a pastoral, not an industrial, people. It is said that you require to send the wealth of the Indies to the Indies to bring the wealth of the Indies from the Indies. The gold-mines required gold-mines to work them. It required great capital to extract these great treasures from the earth's hard crust. So the mines fell into other hands. The richest reef in the world was under their feet, and foreigners came to the Transvaal like flies to honey. A time came when the foreigners outnumbered the Boers, and when, owing to their possession of the mines, they had by far the greater proportion of the wealth of the country in their Uitland hands. This complication led to mischief. The people of Dutch extraction were the dominant class. They ruled the land,

and the people who by their industry were making it rich and great and prosperous, had no say in the government. They were, it would seem, put upon and oppressed by these rulers. Then came a toy rebellion of these men. They were going to make war on the Dutch with one maxim gun and 2500 rifles and a few cartridges. But the Boers quickly stamped out that little flame of rebellion which the breath of Rhodes had fanned. Now, here again was a curious complication. The dominant race had a right to abolish these tin-soldier conspirators, but England intervened. Lives were spared, the ringleader was mercifully dealt with in England, and a franchise for the Uitlander was demanded in very firm tones. A franchise under such circumstances was equivalent to war. The Boers saw that they would be outvoted. They would become the subservient element in the community they had themselves founded. It was asking too much, they thought, to demand their abdication, and they resisted. They had been chased from the south because their freedom was interfered with by a sentimental government; here again their freedom was to be taken from them. They were, by the might of England, to be forced to conclusions with the Uitlanders, who had come to their country led there by their own greed of gain, and who now demanded their country and the power of it at their hands. So the war came, and the result, which was delayed, was inevitable. Although we made no reputation out of it, we were bound to win.

But what is the position now? The white colonists —*née* Uitlanders—are feeling, not the benefit of home interference as they did at the time of the raid and the war, but the detriment of Downing Street and the trouble of St. Stephens. They want now, as the Boers did long ago, to be free to settle their own labour questions—be these questions black or white or yellow —but England will not have it. The sentiment is as blatant as ever. Are we to be warned by the old history? Will interference from home in purely colonial matters, as, for instance, where the colonies are to get their servants from, lead to a new trek, to an excursion not in space, but out of the fold of Imperial Government? There are some pessimists who hold these dark views. We see that, as no Government is strong enough to make the black men work, another labour market had to be resorted to. Government became the registry office for servants for the mines, and furbished up an old convention with China which had been a dead letter since 1860, and passed the ordinance under which the mines now draw some part of their labourers from China—an arrangement which has already resulted in prosperity on the gold ridge of the Transvaal. But here again we are face to face with home sentiment. The Liberals made a party cry of this yellow-labour question, and the Government which had been unable to solve the black problem seemed to have pulled a house about their ears when they, with a view to the prosperity of the Transvaal, became the importers of Chinese. The history of the

sentiment, which is a factor in the deliberations of Downing Street, shows curiously enough that the force of circumstances has "diddled" the Boers. It has been no far-seeing policy to oust them here, to oust them there; the fate of history has been stronger than our policy, stronger than they. But it is an odd thing that in the fulness of time the colonist of British extraction, the Uitlander, should be taking precisely the same view of the native question as the Boer has done from the beginning—a view which led to the great trek, and ultimately to the great war. It is strange, too, that our attitude to the blacks and Boers in the Transvaal to-day, must be the same as the attitude which the Boers held naturally to the Uitlanders before the war. If the home sentiment insists upon the equality of the black and the white man—an equality that the South African colonist, and the Boer too, indignantly denies—it seems that a place must be found for the lazy, loafing, contented black in the constitution of the Transvaal, as a place has been found for him in the constitution of Cape Colony. And of course a place, and an important place, must be found for the Boer in that constitution.

Are these blacks to have votes? are we to concede the colony responsible government? That is one of the urgent questions of to-day in the Transvaal. Are they to have votes? South Africa says "No," but so did Mr. Kruger say "No" when votes were demanded at the sword-point of diplomacy for the Uitlanders. If

these are to have votes, must not that lead to the abdication of the British white man? a greater trek—the abandonment of the Transvaal as an English colony? It is easy to ask questions Only time can answer some of these.

XIX

Africa is exactly like a dinner-plate turned on its face and laid on a table. The table is the sea, and the land runs from it in steep grades to a high flat tableland that is bossed like an old shield with hills and kopjes. This morning, at 6.15, I had my cup of coffee lying at the open window of my bedroom on the car, looking at a blue sky above, shading to a whiter blue at the horizon, the horizon a tumbled ridge of brown and purple kopjes, some of them high, and with a thirty-ton coal-waggon in the immediate foreground. The train was standing still at Norvals Pont station, which is the last station in Cape Colony on the line to Johannesburg, and the Orange River is just a little way north of the station. The picture is a characteristic one. The sky, always beautiful, monopolizing the eye; the bare and stony veldt and distant kopjes—the stone cairns of creation—and a coal-waggon under one's nose to represent the mineral wealth of South Africa. Norvals Pont, if I remember aright, has left its name on the page of history. There were English graves to be seen here and at Springfontein, where we waited an hour for the East London train. It was at Norvals Pont that the Boers wrecked the bridge over the Orange River, and

at Springfontein that Gatacre, after a bad reverse at Stormberg, again met disaster face to face. The graves mark these incidents. But the history of the war is written, and my object is to sketch some phases of myself in these sad surroundings, and here only to record a sigh.

We are over the Orange River—not like most of the rivers I have seen, arid watercourses where torrents race after a shower—and in the Orange River Colony. There are still kopje warts on the face of South Africa, but on the whole the land is flatter here; there are more trees to be seen, more sheep on the land, and farming seems to be pursued with more success here than further south. In the morning we ran alongside some deep dongas, which are, I take it, spruits in cuttings which must have formed natural trenches when the whole of the hills were puffing with rifle-smoke and the "ping" of the bullets sang in the air. That is one thing the war has done—it has put the first layer of interesting history upon a land barren and unlighted in that respect before. What is the next layer to be? Will peace bring plenty? What, in such a climate, is wanting to abundance? It would seem that there are these things wanted—water, capital, and men. After a little rain the veldt blossoms like a garden. Where a farmer has set up a little American windmill and pumps water from the deep cistern of the rocks and irrigates his fields, there are deep waving crops of barley, there are pleasant garden patches. The willows grow pendulous

branches over the watercourse. The water, then, is there at their feet, as the gold was in the Witwatersrand; they have only to harness the wind to pump it for them, and the dry karoo becomes a fertile farm. It is the sun and the climate which all praise. It is the empty water-arteries which leave the land without life. Where these flow there is an oasis. But it wants the real "divining rod" money to find the water, and to harness the wind to the pumping-piston. But capital in South Africa does not take country walks; it rushes to places where it can dabble its hand in gold and diamonds. It may be no misfortune that it goes in that direction, but it is a misfortune that the money-courses which flow over the land, and which would enrich the farms, are as dry as the water-courses. "I have watered thee with my foot," if I remember aright, is a scripture phrase referring to the way in which, in Egypt, the agriculturist in the old days, by tramping on a little dam, allowed the water which it held up to flow over the land, on which anon the rice should grow. Cape Colony and the Orange River Colony require to be watered by the hand—that is, the hand that finds its way to the pocket.

The day in the Orange River Colony on that train journey was monotonous above, below; flat lands and high sunshine. But even with all this, which persuades to weariness, this pleasant journey (we have had excellent cooking, fresh strawberries, and pleasant chat all the way) will be all too soon over. To-morrow we shall be in Johannesburg.

XX

The colonies are a fine school. Perhaps it is only the most apt scholars that go there. What takes most men to the small end of the wedge of civilization is a spirit of enterprise, and that spirit is the making of a man and of a country. There is something, even the spirit of unrest, in the province which makes for progress. But although, perhaps, excellent pupils go, the colonies do good educational work on them. The men I have hitherto met are abreast of the times. They have not drunk of the deep wells of history, they are not scholars, but they are alert men full of knowledge of the land of their adoption, and with more knowledge of the movements of affairs at home than the average Englishman who is mixed up in these affairs. I met men here who have shrewder knowledge of the fiscal policy than most of the newspaper-fed folk at home. There is a sprightliness about their knowledge which pleases after the solid stodgy information of our own people.

> ' Tact clinches the bargain,
> Sails out of the bay,
> Gets the vote in the Senate
> Spite of Webster and Clay."

The pioneer—the South African—has resource, which is a kind of tact. It is the same quality, only "rough hewn." This is a land which requires resource; it

requires humouring. But it requires more; it requires labour. Rightly looked at, the black man is the best asset of the country. But they have been and are being spoiled. They are spoiled by their "slave" wives. They were spoiled by the Government during the war, who gave them wages of £4 a month, while before they had only earned £1 10*s.* in the same period, and while at the same time the Boers who employed them on similar services gave them nothing but hard words and harsh blows. That has spoiled the labour market. But the missionaries, you are told on all hands, have done the same thing. To teach the black that he is as good as the white, is to veneer the solid blackness of sin with the specious veneer of cunning. It is a little sad that the making of men half Christians seems to spoil them as men. It is a melancholy proverb of advice to those wanting servants, but one that is freely given, "Don't take a mission boy."

But, as we have seen, to get the labour you must have some means of making the black work; persuasion in such a case is like water on a duck's back—it runs off. Wages, the fear of poverty, the hope of gain, will persuade a man to work if he is white, but the Kaffir only labours for a little while, and then he will "go and sit," as he puts it. As if sitting was what he was put in the world for! There are many white men and Boers who would, as we have seen, get the asset realized by compulsion. Others, more mealy-mouthed, shrink from the word, and say we must find some way of taxing the black

man; and if the inducement of wages in front won't persuade him, this *vis a tergo* will make him get up and do—for to be up and doing is to be his salvation, as well as the salvation of the country.

There are, of course, the two views: one, that the black is an animal, a good-humoured animal on the whole, who deserves to be well treated, like your horse, and who requires to be ridden with a bit and a rein. This view may be mistaken, but it is not vindictive. These people, although they would make him work, would treat him well; and they say, further, that in this state of subjection the native is happier and better than in any other. They thrive on compulsion. Liberty is a boon they only abuse. The roads at the Cape were made, as we saw, by convict labour. There are one thousand natives employed at De Beers' mine who are convicts hired by the company from the Government, and these convict labourers, I am assured, are as sleek and as happy, sleeker, happier, and better, than the unconvicted labourer beside them. Is this slavery? What, it seems, ought to happen is to convict the black race and make it work. While speaking of De Beers, we passed Jaggersfontein the other day, within twelve miles of the rich diamond-mine where very white stones—perhaps the best on the market—are found. The largest diamond in the world was found at this mine.[1] It was, when cut, four times the

[1] This was true when it was written. The "Excelsior" diamond of the Jaggersfontein mine was 970 carats. But on January 26, 1905, a diamond was found in the Premier mine which is 4½ inches by 2½ inches, and is 3032 carats.

size of the Koh-i-noor. It was so large that there was no market for it. It was held by the company for years, and ultimately this mountain of light had to be cut in two.

But to return to the labour question. How does it go in America? They have abolished slavery; but now, without admitting their mistake, they have got vagrancy laws in the Southern States, and any offence coming within the vague term "vagrancy" makes the black liable to conviction; and when convicted, he is hired out just as the black convicts in South Africa are to the De Beers Company. It is odd that a country has to get its labour through the prison door; but we have the fact that the country requires muscular labour, and there is a chance for statesmanship to point out how it is to be procured. If he proposes a hut-tax on the women's huts to prevent polygamy with its wife-labour, in a measure interfering with the liberty of the subject, by all means try that. If he prefers to adopt wide vagrancy laws, and to make these the means of a full labour market, again by all means.

But I said there were two views. I have set out one. The other is held vehemently by many. To these the gold of the Rand is the curse of the country. To these the whole country is run—and Lord Milner is a willing administrator—in the interest of the mine-owners. "The Rand Lords," as they are contemptuously called, want cheap labour, for the reason that the more they pay in wages the less there is to divide in dividends. It is these men who would grind out the lives of the poor easy-going blacks, for the last sixpence of their ten per cent. This

is the whole conspiracy against the down-trodden Kaffir, and the Government is the cat's-paw of the mine-owners, and the means to their plethoric aggrandisement. Now, as in the case of shields, there are two sides to most things; and even in these headlong assertions there is a grain of truth; it is true that it is so small an assay that it is not worth working. But we may admit that the mine-owners want cheap labour. And that is not a sin, otherwise Bright and Cobden, who repealed the Corn Laws with a view to cheap labour for manufacturers, were the chief of sinners. But there is one solid fact which it will not do to overlook, and it is this: That the country without the mines cannot pay its way; that the mines can only be worked by means of cheap labour; and that the prosperity of the country, at present and for many years to come, must depend on the mines being worked. It is, no doubt, possible that in time the land of South Africa may come into wide cultivation. It is possible that the present prosperity of the Rand may be only a temporary coruscation of prosperity, but in the mean time, it is the mines that are making "the mare to go;" it is the mines that are the beating commercial heart of the continent, and to do anything to hinder or to frustrate that great industry, would be equivalent to national suicide.

I do not despair of the future of the land, although some experiments in the wholesome direction of land settlement have been pre-eminently failures. I hope that a time will soon come when labour will be found for the

fields, and the whole country may be made as good farming land as that of the "conquered territory." I regret that at the present time mealies have to be imported. I hope to see cotton grown in many parts of our barren colonies. I believe that sugar and tobacco and fruit, and other things, may soon bulk with feathers and goats' hair amongst the colonial exports; and that not so much because these will contribute towards the wealth of the colony, as because they will show that a population of whites, assisted by black labour, has taken root in the soil. It is white men that is the crop I desire to see growing in the colony. But, however excellent it is to have a hope for the future, we must lay hold of that future by the handle of the present. And to-day we must work the mines, and to work them we must have hands. It is to get these that is the problem of to-day. I spoke of the black race as an asset. But the climate of that basking continent is another asset. In many places you have only to "tickle the land with the hoe, and it laughs in the harvest." You throw away a peach-stone, and up comes a tree. But the land wants to be fed and watered, and it will, in its slow turn, feed and clothe half the world. Here is a statistic which speaks a volume for the climate. The possible sunshine for every day in the year, between sunrise and sunset, being taken at 100, the high plateau of Africa enjoys 95 per cent. of the possible sunshine. But that was not meant merely for basking in, for the air is so fresh in that high land that it whispers "work."

XXI

But there is something more required from wise statesmanship. Fiscal policy is much thought of and spoken of to-day, and it is truly said that South Africa gives the mother country a preference of 2 per cent. That is true, and from that small nucleus I hope a treaty of commerce, which may ultimately result in free trade between England and South Africa, may result. There is no inter-state tariff in the United States, and to that fact is in part due the colossal prosperity that America has achieved. There is no inter-colonial tariff in South Africa. There ought to be no tariff between Britain and the colonies I am speaking of. That way prosperity lies. But, even pending that, I think a commercial treaty with mutual preferences, or, better still, mutual free trade, is well advised. There is no rivalry here; South Africa does not manufacture; we do not produce gold or diamonds, or ostrich feathers, or copper, or mealies. But in this conclusion there is another aspect worth a glance. We know how, in the controversy as to fiscal reform which has waxed and waned in Britain during the last year and a half, the curious process of dumping has been brought much into evidence. The great trade

combines of Germany and America have been a means to an undesirable end, and it is quite possible that these great combinations will in the future have to be dealt with by the strong hand of the law. But here in South Africa there is a curious indication of similar tendencies. We do not call it a "combine," we call it a "conference," and the conference of steamship owners have agreed on freights which are certainly unfavourable to the colonies, and equally unfavourable to the mother country. This matter requires to be looked into. Take a case. Goods which had been manufactured in England had to be sent to South Africa. The freight from Southampton was so high that the goods were sent to Hamburg and were put on board the very same British steamer which would have carried them from Southampton, and the man who paid the freight made money by sending them *viâ* Hamburg. How can English producers compete with German producers of the same goods under these circumstances? There is another evil to be complained of. Shippers get a rebate from the shipping company, and unless they receive the rebate, they have to charge their customers and the ultimate consumer higher than their rivals in the trade who get their goods from Germany by German lines of steamers. Therefore it is obvious they must take the rebate. But the rebate is not paid to them until the end of the year, and if they cease to ship their goods by the rebate-giving line, they lose the rebate. This is a fine specimen of the liberty of the subject. I am not sure that the Lobola works greater hardships. The

government has its goods carried to South Africa for about 16*s.* a ton, while the private shipper has to pay 30*s.* to 35*s.* a ton. There is a law in England against undue preferences by railway companies. Under the same circumstances a railway company cannot prefer trader A to trader B, either in the matter of rates or facilities, and if it does prefer or prejudice one to the other, the Railway Commissioners interfere. But of course that only refers to traders in England. Is it not much worse that British ships should prefer German merchants and German shippers to Englishmen? There is a very strong opinion in South Africa that the conference or combine must be broken up. But, while the public complain of the ships, they also complain of the railways—railway rates are high. The wealth of South Africa is mainly in the heart of the country, far from the seaboard. Gold must reach the sea, food must come from the sea by rail, and the various colonies have been in the habit of exacting tolls for their revenue purposes which have made the consumers in the interior "pay through the nose." I suppose Johannesburg is the dearest town in the world. The smallest coin there is the "tickey," or threepenny-bit, and that will buy nothing. But I see there is to be a conference as to the whole question of railways within a very short time. I hope something may come of it. To my thinking, the railways are the way to imperial federation.

XXII

THAT South Africa is, or may be, a white man's country is a dream—a delusion. The only chance it has of becoming a white man's country, and then only in the remote future, is by becoming first of all a yellow man's compound. It is possible that if we had treated the natives as North American colonists treated the Red Indians, if we had warred with the sword and with the more potent "fire water," the race coming in deadly contact with us might in time have made the "great trek," and have disappeared as the natives of North America are doing; and when we had killed these black heirs to the country the inheritance would have been ours. But that has not been our heartless policy. Indeed, we have passed strict liquor laws, notwithstanding our tall talk about the liberty of the subject, which ought to include a liberty to get drunk; and we give long terms of imprisonment to any one supplying drink to a native. We also, as I pointed out, punish natives with death when they are convicted of assaults on white women—another curious indication of the equal scales of justice when weighing black and white crimes. There is no chance, then, that the entire race, which is at present

represented by something like six million blacks south of the Zambesi, will die out. Death will not solve the problem for us. Indeed, if it did, as we have seen, we would be in a worse plight than before, for without the blacks as servants, South Africa cannot in any sense be the country of the white man.

But we indicated that it might become our country through the yellow compound. It is well to recognize the fact that the mines are the heart, at present, of our South African empire. It is strange that a country like South Africa should not be self-supporting; that it has to buy its flour from Australia and its mealies in South America. With its wide veldt, it still imports much of its meat; and although the land is full of fruit, it has to rely for jam and onions and eggs on other countries. But the industry of this group of colonies is mining. There is gold, there is coal, there is copper, there is tin, there are diamonds, and it is upon these deep industries that the country depends; it is with the products of these that it must pay its way. My own impression, as I have said, is that as time goes on these colonies will become more independent, that its lazy farms and lazy farmers may do more for its markets; but in the mean time it is the heart of the mines' beat—the stamps—that sends the blood of being fast or slow through the whole body of the colony.

Mr. Chamberlain, speaking in the House of Commons in 1903, after his visit to our South African colonies, said, "The whole of South Africa at the present time is more or

less dependent for its future prosperity on the Transvaal. In the Transvaal there has been in the course of a few years a gigantic development of a great industry, as the result of which tens of thousands of British workmen have left their own country and permanently established themselves there. Great towns have sprung up out of the veldt with great industries, which are contingent on the main industry, and the men who by their skill, capital, industry, and knowledge—not for philanthropic motives, but with the idea of filling their pockets—have brought this about are not to be treated as pariahs, and as if they were doing what was not for the advantage of the country. That is an absurd position to take up, and in future do let us leave the mine-owners alone, and let us treat them with the same kindly respect with which we treat coal-owners, cotton-spinners, bankers, and financiers, or anybody else engaged in using his brains to make his fortune."

But that this excellent advice was not followed it is unnecessary to say. People who live in big houses, South African millionaires who make large profits, are fair game for the cheap writer, and there is no close season. Thus a competent writer for the *Daily Chronicle* joins the hunt. It is his view, after a cursory visit to South Africa, that "if ever there was a white man's country, it (South Africa) is the one." This general conclusion seems to have been arrived at because Mr. Naylor was convinced that there was no necessity for yellow labour in the mines, that unskilled white labour

could supply all their wants, and he seems to have been led to this conclusion by Mr. Creswell's experiment at the Village Main Reef mine—an experiment which, by the way, ended in failure. Mr. Creswell's experiment was to secure the labour of starving whites by offering them very much the same wages as he was paying to the blacks. But Mr. Naylor's own statements account for the deplorable failure. He says these unskilled whites earned about 9*s.* a day—that is, even allowing that the unskilled whites, a weedy starving lot, worked at the rate of 360 days in the year, an earning of less than £14 a month. But Mr. Naylor, in another page of his pamphlet, instructively shows that the cost of living for a family—man with a wife and three children—amounts to £24 10*s.* a month. And he leaves us to solve the problem how the white man is to make these distant ends meet. It was an interesting experiment, like that of reducing the horse or the camel—was it by degrees?—to a diet of one straw a day. The result might have been foretold.

But from his own figures there is at present only a difference, between the cost of getting the gold and the value of a ton of gold when got, of 10*s.* By substituting white labour, costing, as we know it does, 20*s.* a day, or, even at his own figure, 10*s.* a day, for black labour at 2*s.* to 3*s.* a day, the average cost of getting a ton would be increased by 10*s.* 1*d.* a ton. But the average dividend has fallen below 10*s.* per ton crushed, so that unskilled white labour would put an end to any

return upon the capital invested, because it would wipe out all possible profit. Under these circumstances it is not to be wondered at that most people, who have informed themselves, have come to the conclusion that "under the present conditions and cost of living the use of white unskilled labour is economically impossible."

But that it may be possible to make this land more of a white man's country, if service labour can be had from China for the mines, is certain. Indeed, it is being accomplished at the present time. There are 6500 stamps at work to-day. The confident hope of the people in the Rand is that there will be 16,000 or 17,000 stamps at work in five or six years. For every 100 stamps crushing, approximately 175 white and 1300 coloured men are employed. If the 17,000 stamps can be made to crush, there would be direct employment for 220,000 unskilled workmen—black or yellow—and for 18,000 skilled white men. Who, then, is freezing out white labour—those who desire to have yellow hands at work, or those who desire that the baited Rand lords should not make any profits out of their industry? The question for all sane men—and politicians in lucid intervals—is, what is best for the country? Those who have seen it and studied the matter on the spot have only one answer to that question—the mines must be worked. Muscular labour must be procured. White unskilled labour is impossible. Black unskilled labour is deficient. Under these circumstances, there was nothing for it but the course which

was, we think, wisely and humanely taken. It is therefore, as we said, through the employment of the Chinese that a hope is held out to the country that it may become more and more a rich colony and white man's land; but to secure this we must get the heart of the country—the mines—to beat with the throbs of the crushers, and to do so we must supply these with labour—if not black, then, in the name of necessity, yellow.[1]

[1] I see that Mr. Quinn, at one time a stubborn opponent of the employment of Chinese labour, has renounced for the future all opposition to Chinese labour. While refusing to apologize for his attitude in the past, he said the situation had now changed. "The position is this:—The Ordinance is passed, the Chinese are here, and the people seem contented. The question, therefore, is finished." By no means unwise acquiescence. Mr. Wills, the newly elected member for North Dorset, is not so wise. He spoke of the Chinese Ordinance "with which the country was disgusted." But as these words were uttered just after his election, perhaps he was a little giddy with his victory.

XXIII

To be in South Africa and not see a steinbok and other kinds of antelopes would be ridiculous. So a little way south of Bloemfontein we came in sight of a great herd, which scampered away from the train, not without some frisky jumps; and once when we had passed Bloemfontein, a town which radiates in streets on the flat red earth from the market-place in straight lines, we saw some more of these bucks, but they continued to graze peacefully upon the yellow hair which they call grass.

The capital of the Orange River Colony did not impress me. What can on a hot and airless summer afternoon? It seems, with its 33,000 inhabitants, to be prosperous for a South African town. South of it we saw a cemetery, where the many who died of enteric were buried. That was a great battle. It occurred after the relief of Kimberley and the battle of Paardeburg—the battle people spoke of with a sigh, as needless bloodshed:—what do they think of the carnage at 203 Metre Hill?—and the battle with disease raged in hospitals for weeks, and our casualties numbered some 5000. It was in this connection that some philanthropists attacked our

hospital system; but they did not seem to remember that we were at war—and that makes a difference.

A few miles north of Bloemfontein we came on the first thing that could without a solecism be called a wood. It was the first make-believe of a forest I had seen, and the green of those native trees gave my eyes a holiday after the two days' hard work with stones and rocks and veldt. The little forest had a few scouts and skirmishers clambering up the sides of a kopje, and the forest set me thinking. I was going in Lord Roberts' footsteps when he marched north from Bloemfontein, and possibly my thoughts were going in a beaten path too. But this was the direction. The Government have miles of railway, and the sleepers of a railway do not last for ever. Further, if the country is to be developed, there must be many more miles of railway made, and for these again sleepers will be wanted. The gauge of South African railways is only 3 feet 6 inches, and before long it will have to be changed to 4 feet 8½ inches, if they are to attain the speed of the hare instead of the deliberateness of the tortoise. The white ant—we have seen millions of their mud and sand castles to-day, some of them, however, had been wrecked and were in ruins, owing to the visit of the ant-bear, which, I believe, is more like a pig with a long snout than a bear—will attack any but the hardest wood, and the sleepers in use are made of red wood, or jarrah wood, and have to be imported from Australia. Why on earth these, or some of them, should not grow here, I cannot conceive. In many parts where the soil is

scanty and the stones are prominent, I have seen fir trees grow with tenacious life. The land for miles is idle as the native. Why is not the Government, like Sir Walter Scott, "aye putting in trees?" They will, as his servant told him, be "growing when you're sleeping," and even that might be said with some justice of our untiring Government. History proves that governments sometimes sleep. But here they have a market for their wood in their own hands. Here the lazy lands, even the pauper kopjes, might be put to work and made to grow trees. Surely the experiment is worth trying. The blue gum grows everywhere, but better trees than that can be made at home here. But I hold out to myself ulterior advantages. It has always been the view of the common people that trees produce rain. Now, there is more than meets the eye in this common belief. It is obvious to any one who goes in a motor along an English road that trees keep the road damp. It is under these that you have to look out for skids. Now, that is usually one of the things that is wanted in South Africa. Its evil plight is that most of the rain that falls is evaporated. If in the neighbourhood of Johannesburg you collect water in a reservoir, the whole rainfall in the year being about 30 inches, you must be prepared for an evaporation from the surface of your reservoir of 62 inches in the year. New forests planted would be reservoirs of moisture, would hold it up, prevent evaporation, pay the water out slowly, and the dry rivers, instead of their passionate floods and summer-dry courses, might have water in them. This

would be irrigation on a grand scale. So far, then, we are on safe ground in our advocacy of forests; but how do trees, besides keeping rain when it falls, produce rain? That, as I have said, is a belief; is there any truth in it?

Now, Africa lies between the Indian Ocean and the Atlantic. There must be enough of moisture floating over the dry continent to make rainfall enough to turn Africa into a meadow. Now, it is not beyond the power of science some day to produce conditions which might lead to a deposit of rain. If I gather Sir Oliver Lodge's opinion aright, he thinks that showers may be achieved. But is it not possible that forests may achieve them? May not these in future be the witch-doctors of a desert land? I am speculating at large; but if the leaves in their chemical action upon their environment produce, as some say they do, Röntgen rays, and Röntgen rays produce the nuclei which are necessary to condensation—if there were forests, is it not possible that a thirsty Africa might "quaff the sky"? I have seen hundreds of places in this wide land which were fit for nothing else, where trees would grow, where in time they would produce a richer soil and stay the soil which the torrents at present sweep away, and if at the same time they could bring down a gentle dew from heaven, they would be a blessing to all arid places. At any rate, more planting of trees is wanted.

North of Bloemfontein and on the way to Kroonstadt and Vereeniging the country is flat and more like some English counties than anything I have seen in Africa.

The grass is greener, and we have seen hundreds of acres ploughed. They were ploughing in one place with a team of twelve oxen instead of with a steam-plough, which in these flat, unfenced lands, which stretch miles and leagues to a flat horizon, would do excellent work. But steam-ploughs mean capital, and that is as scarce in Africa as rain.

The day has been a hot one, even in the saloon, with all the windows open and such air as the sedate train made by its grunting progress. But even these windows had a drawback, and admitted one of the ten plagues—dust. Indeed, in the bright sunshine we saw many of these gyrating sand spouts walk the earth and scale the heavens like smoke; and some of these came and rested with us. To-day, on the fatter lands, we have seen many cattle, many sheep, and many goats. I asked if they had sheep-dogs, and found, to my regret, that there were none; but I found that genius is still recognized in the land, for a goat with its wise beard is put in front of the "silly sheep" to lead them home. I think the goat deserves a better name than he has got, especially when I remember that goat's-hair is one of the few valuable exports of this part of the empire.

But the hot dust-powdered day came to an end finely, as its predecessor had done, although the hills were not here to bedaub the evening with rich colours; the hills were not here to give us their moon-rises in succession behind successive kopjes. Still, the evening and the coldness, which springs upon you like a cruel

beast on its prey, came quickly, and the electric lights were switched on, and we were at home in the car, and another meal came in the long procession which strutted through these days. I cannot let you into the car, or tell you anything of the kindness and courtesy of our host and hostess. No, nor of the excellent talk which let bare excoriated miles of route slip by us without molesting us. All that was pleasant, but I cannot make a bit of a book out of such excellent friends. To bed, to wake up just outside the gold capital in a morning, like all the others, sunny and sweet.

XXIV

Johannesburg. The gold-rush only took place in 1886, although gold had been gotten from the close hands of the rocks before that, and to-day, eighteen years after the "boom" (I hate the word, although it is indigenous here), there is a city on the bare veldt and high ridge, 6000 feet above the sea—nearly as high as the Rigi Kulm—and containing from 150 to 200,000 black and white inhabitants, all greedy for gold, all living directly or indirectly by the industry which brings those hidden arteries, which yield the blood of commerce, to the dazzled light of day. We took some fifty-six hours on the journey from Cape Town, wasting a pleasant balmy hour at Kroonstadt, where we felt it possible to peep into the bowels of the earth, for here there are coal-pits. Having time at the Sand River to walk from the train—while it made one of its numerous pauses—to see the grave of and monument to Major Seymour, the story of whose death many will remember, we went. The monuments are prominent, not far from the place where he fell; but the evening seemed more full of prayer than the white slabs and crosses with their frigid record. When our curiosity

had paid its tribute, and the train had had a rest, we went on through the darkening night to the Vaal River, and in the morning into Johannesburg, through such suburbs as locations and compounds make for a town, which is itself mostly suburbs. All the white heaps of "tailings" to the eastern side of the town, as far as Simmer and Jacks, were unendingly prominent in the sunlight. These great heaps are what are called "tips" at home. They are the *débris* of the rocks after they have been raked and sifted by the amalgam process and the cyanide process and what not, for the gold which nature had laid away in her safe. Even these heaps, it is said, have gold in them, and will at the magic word of science be forced to give it up. We passed through Germiston and Jeppe, and so through the town of suburbs—for Johannesburg sprawls—into the Park Station.

We call people nice when they are nice to us. "If she is not fair to me, what care I how fair she be." Now here, kindness, which had carried us all the way up to Johannesburg in luxury's lap, met us with a carriage, and we were driven to a beautiful suburb, instead of having to put up in a close hotel in the hot dusty town, which would not have been nearly so nice as the beautiful house, standing in garden-grounds, above woods of many different kinds of gum and wattle and fir trees, and looking away to the north, where the Magaliesberg mountains make a rampant horizon.

Oh, what a bath is after a long journey and an early

rise! And a bath in water, costing as it does in Johannesburg from seven to ten shillings for a thousand gallons. I felt as if I was bathing in gold. But why not? As we have seen, every one here lives on gold, and just as I arrived there had been a steady rise in shares—not a bounding leap, which often overleaps itself and falls on the other side, but a good promising rise. It is this which has made the Rand in good humour, and it is due in part, at least, to Chinese labour. They expect to have twenty-four thousand Chinamen at work before the end of the year; and so far they find that they have worked well, although, as yet, only learners.

It is everything to arrive in a country at the period of a crisis; and there are always crises in South Africa. When I got to Johannesburg, although the faces were broad with smiles to greet prosperity, and not long as they had been since the abortive boom after the war, I got there when a new war was breaking out. Don't let me exaggerate, party politics was being inaugurated. The air was full of the electricity which makes for thunder.

A promise had been made at home that the days of Crown Colony government were numbered, and that a representative government would be given to the Transvaal. Where even half a dozen Englishmen are gathered together, there are the seeds of free institutions. It is the hereditary disease of the Anglo-Saxon. That promise having been given, now came the tug of war. That the representative government would include

a black vote as it does at the Cape, was not to be thought of. Indeed, no white man in the Transvaal would stand such a franchise. If it had been mooted, revolution would have raised its ugly head. What was in the dusty air of Johannesburg was a question between responsible and representative government. Now the two words, as opposed, sound foreign to English ears, but their meaning in these baby parties was well defined. The representative government which one party was formed to further, meant not the government we enjoy (I am not meaning to be ironical) in England, but an elective body which the executive government was still in the hands of—let us call it, for short, the Crown. This was a halfway house policy, because in the view of many it would be disastrous to finish the democratic journey. The Progressive party—a party composed of able, clear-seeing men—were in favour of this as, at least, a temporary expedient. The other party in the little state desired responsible government (that is in effect what we have in England), and what we, following the nomenclature of Mill and Hare, call representative government. Here, then, was a pretty quarrel. The one desired to protect the colony by the maintenance of the meddling fingers of Downing Street, the other said no, let us govern ourselves. The cross cleavage was curious and wonderful. The Progressives were in favour of the tentative government idea. The Responsibles were in favour of the non-intervention of the home government in colonial affairs. But the Progressives

had, to a man, been in favour of the introduction of Chinese labour, which was effected for them by the home government, but had been questioned, much to the disgust of all South Africa, by the home opposition. The responsible government party said, with some sense, look how, in relation to our local labour question, we were made the football of parties at home. One party there, to get power, would deprive us of the labour which is essential to our well-being, to our existence. Are we to tolerate such "finger in the pie" interference? No. While the Progressives, who were, as we have said, thoroughly in favour of Chinese labour, feared the result of a popular vote, which might be more than half Boer. Time was bringing its revenges. We had asked votes from the Boers, and been refused because they feared we would outvote them. Now the cautious Progressives refused to put all the power in the hands of an electorate—less than half British—which might govern Johannesburg. Here, then, as we see, party politics were growing with the precipitancy and the prolificacy of fruit and vegetables round Johannesburg. The names of those who associated themselves with the Progressive party were mostly English. The names of those who associated themselves with the full measure of Responsible government were for the most part Jewish or colonial names.

Now, that made me think that this was the old buried feud which was walking the earth again. Here were Boers and Uitlanders, the former saying, "Let us

govern ourselves, let us have votes;" the latter saying, "No; we want justice, we want English protection, otherwise we shall be put upon as we were before the war."

Now, I say, that was the interesting juncture at which I arrived. Not, remember, that the Progressives desired to shut the door upon responsible government. It would, in their view, come in time, when they would have an indubitable majority. It was well to go slow at first. I may be rash in expressing an opinion, but I think that the conferring of the most extended rights of self-government ought not to be a matter of a few months, but of experimental years. If we mean to keep South Africa, we must remain the supreme people. Are we, then, to hand over the modern sceptre, the vote, which may oust us from supremacy, to our enemies? It is still the question who shall have the upper hand.

During my stay in South Africa, there was a good deal of sporadic talk about this matter of the future constitution. Some of the talk, for example, much that was said at Brandford, was irresponsible enough. The Orange River colonists are said to be well affected to the English, and they say it themselves, whatever that is worth, but at Brandford they showed their claws in some barbed language—if that is not a hopelessly mixed metaphor, like that of a recent South African orator, who said of some enactment which it was proposed to pass into law, "You are laying the last straw on the camel's back, and by that means you will kill the goose

that lays the golden eggs." I don't wonder that he finished up with the golden eggs if he was a Johannesburger. But it was the Boer Conference at Brandford on the 3rd that I was speaking of, and there, according to the newspaper headline, General Hertzog was "outspoken." That is mild for a headline. He accused the Government of a breach of faith, and repeated it. It always sounds worse if you repeat it. Now, what it turns out to be, from the general's own showing, was this—that Lords Kitchener and Milner both promised self-government to the Orange River Colony, on similar lines to that granted to Cape Colony. But the breach of faith is this—that self-government, in the case of the Free State, "will only be a matter of a few years," and now the Government propose to give representative government to the Transvaal before they have given self-government to the Orange River Colony. There seems to have been no promise as to the order in which these boons were to be conferred, although there may have been an impression on the part of some of the soft-minded Orange River Boers that they were to have home rule first. This, then, is the shadow breach of faith of which we are accused. General Hertzog has not studied logic, whatever his achievements in the cultivation of Billingsgate may have been. But some of these speeches—containing the demand that Dutch should be the language in South Africa, and other exorbitant claims—might lead people at home to believe that the country was on the edge of revolution. But most of these

speeches give a quite mistaken impression of the real ideas of the people. The meeting in question was the clever result of the tactics of a newspaper, which is more set on advertisement than rebellion, and the speeches were "sound and fury." On the whole, I came to the conclusion that a good deal of talk was as wholesome for the people as the blowing off of steam is for an engine. It is strident, but saves a burst. Suppressed volcanoes mean earthquakes. There is, however, a party that desires to nip sedition in the bud. They are a little previous, and begin to pinch before there is any bud or any spring to encourage it. To these a saying of Mr. Kruger (I still give him Mr., for he was not such a great man that he could shed it) might be recommended. He was told that there was smouldering revolution in the land, and he said quite wisely, "You cannot chop off the head of a tortoise until it sticks it out." When it did stick it out, as we know, he proved himself quite equal to the chopping of it, as the Reform Committee knows to its cost.

But the responsible government movement, while it might lead to serious results, is not revolution, but is only half-hearted politics. There are many who believe that those who have adopted this doctrine as a platform are not the weighty men they think themselves. But it is only time weighs men.

The Transvaal is now, therefore, in the throes of constitution-making, although the solution of the problem must be postponed for many months. The Progressive

Association have been waving the Union Jack, always a profitable but sometimes an irritating operation. Their programme is "To maintain the British Flag," and even the Responsible Government Association takes off its hat and is in favour of the British Flag. The second plank in their platform is the recognition that all voters shall have the same privileges, and their votes the same value. Here again the rival associations agree, and when these two agree their unanimity is amazing. The next thing they agree upon is "a firm and just native and Asiatic policy in accordance with South African ideas." Here the two associations stand shoulder to shoulder against Exeter Hall. They next are both supporters of any measure to make South Africa a white man's home. They both are opposed to interference in the affairs of the Transvaal by party politicians elsewhere (Party whips please copy). But after all this unanimity, Mr. E. P. Solomon's association splits from the other on the only matter in their creeds that has any meaning, although even here the split is not so significant as might be supposed.

They have to-day a Crown Colony ruled by an able gentleman who has recently been called "the Autocrat of Sunnyside." But a door has been opened for exit from that dark closet—a Crown colony. What are they to have instead of it? The one proposal, as we have seen, was to have a government in part elected and in part nominated.[1] That the one party desires, and the

[1] The Progressive party fears that the white population in the

other rejects. Under that the executive was to be nominated by the Crown, and would have a sufficient preponderance of votes; and under such a constitution the elected votes might, as the Americans have it, "play around." But Mr. E. P. Solomon's association (it is noted that Mr. E. P. Solomon is a brother of the able and genial Attorney-General and Acting Governor of the Transvaal) won't have that; "they want men elected by the people of the country." But although they know what they want (which is wisdom), and hold meetings (which is amusement), they know they won't get it (which is sense). Mr. Solomon said he did not for a moment think they were going to have responsible government at once. So long as Mr. Alfred Lyttleton was Colonial Secretary, and—he was sorry to say it—so long as Lord Milner was Governor, they would not have responsible government. Now, here it is worth noting that Mr. Solomon seems to have forgotten "the plank" about party politics elsewhere. What is this pessimistic sentence but a sop to Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman and Company in England? Is that the hope of the new South Africa? If so, it would seem that South Africa claims some right to influence English politics, but that England is warned not to interfere with those of South Africa. But I hardly think these politicians are serious; they are "playing around." They

Transvaal may not be placed on an equality as regards their vote. They point out that if the country is favoured as against the towns, it would be a reversion to the policy of Kruger, and they desire a redistribution of seats every four years.

are getting their names up, which is a very laudable project. But such as it is, it is a very pretty sham party fight as it stands.

One is sorry to see that Mr. Solomon has taken up that stupid instrument "obstruction" as a means to his end. This is a great infirmity of ignoble politics. If, he said, responsible government was not granted, his party "would block every measure and withhold supplies until the home government gave in." If force is not an argument, neither is obstruction a reason. His government would be "irresponsible" government, which would affect prejudicially the credit of the Transvaal in Europe at a time when credit is essential to the prosperity of the colony.

XXV

JOHANNESBURG as a town surprises and disappoints. It has been put up in a hurry, and is mostly built of corrugated iron. There are finished buildings, mostly of stucco, and innumerable shanties. There are wide streets, but they are all dusty. Commissioner Street is the main artery for business. It is here that, in imitation of America, skyscrapers have been built, which domineer over the town more than the old fort does. I saw when I arrived that it is a town of suburbs, but there are thick congested areas where the metal hovels are so close together that the air cannot get between them. This, I take it, was the old town of Johannesburg. Old? Yes, it is sixteen or seventeen years old. In many places in Johannesburg there are bare excoriated lands, which are vacant at present, because greed sterilizes for a time. Then the roads—every one says that they are an immense improvement on what they had before. One remembers what was said of the military roads in Scotland—

> "If you had seen these roads
> Before they were made,
> You would hold up your hands
> And bless General Wade."

The roads in Johannesburg are in the pre-Wade

condition. Some of the suburbs, like Park Town, are suburbs of palaces, and from some of these, as from the houses above the poor golf links, the views are as fine as could be desired, and make the imagination ashamed. In the evening I had a pleasant walk through this really fine suburb, and through some of the green tree avenues of the Sachsenwald, which lies at its rocky feet. I even saw the measly menagerie, which is said to boast a lion, and which certainly possesses an eland, a giraffe, and a baboon. I saw, too, a magnificent sunset, which Turner perhaps could have put in permanent colours, but no one else could have touched with the brush.

No doubt, popular fallacies are the raw material of history, and there are two which I have exploded to-day. It is said—and there is nothing like making generalizations sweeping—that the birds are not song birds in Africa. This evening, sitting in an aromatic grove of gum trees, which no doubt was good for its throat, a bird was discoursing very sweet music in liquid notes just as the gorgeous darkness all starred, fell on the high plateau. But there is another fallacy which is afoot. They say there is no twilight here, but there is. It is not "a lengthened sweetness long drawn out," as it is sometimes in our northern summer days, but there is a short pleasant evening and an after-glow. The day is punctual to business hours.

> "It never comes an hour too soon,
> Nor makes too long a day."

I had the impression, however, that the day's shutters

were put up at the stroke of six, and that the dark fell like a thunderclap, but there is a distinct and fine "gloaming," a pleasant compromise between night and day, and after that comes the "murk," which is finely mixed with stars.

To-day I went to visit some "claims." They are not much to look at. The theory of the thing is interesting; well, perhaps not, but instructive—that is better. The State claims all the gold, and when a freehold owner of property begins to work for gold, then the State makes a proclamation. That proclamation reserves a certain part (one-tenth part) by agreement or "pacht" (pact) with the owner, and gives him, under the Mynpacht, a half-share of the annual payments for licences, which are paid by those who have "pegged-out claims." When land is proclaimed under the present gold law, there is a scramble, and every one who in the scrimmage pegs out a claim has to pay the Government for the licence, or leave to work. I am informed, and believe, that this scramble under the "gold law" for claims has not often led to bloodshed, but it certainly is a device which looks in that direction. The Boer Government, seeing the evils of a system that they had inaugurated, proposed to have a lottery for the claims, but the war, which turned over so many leaves of Fate's book, put an end to that commendable project, and in the mean time the old law, which allows the pegging of claims between six in the morning and six at night, and the jumping of claims already pegged out under the cover of

night, exists. There is, however, a new gold law in egg, waiting for the hatching, which proposes to put up the claims in proclaimed lands to auction, in which case the longest purse would get the claim, and the Government and the owner would get more than they do at present. When a man has got a claim, he need not work it for gold, but can sit on it so long as he pays the licence duty. And when he works it according to the ordinary custom, the gold is his, and he can sell the stone that he wins in getting it, or the water he pumps in his winning operations to any one who will buy. All this great erudition I gather from the decision of the Chief Justice of the Transvaal, in a case in which, if I remember aright, the Worcester Mining Company were the defendants.

With regard to other intricate questions connected with the gold law, such as Bavatplatz (even as to the spelling of it I am doubtful), I must peremptorily decline to enter.

XXVI

Politics in the Transvaal all turn on the pivot of mines. A new turn was given to these by the words of Lord Harris, spoken at the meeting of the Consolidated Gold Fields of South Africa, which was held in London on November 8, 1904. "The Transvaal," he said, "is emerging from the corrupt and oligarchical administration of the late President Kruger, through the intermediate process of Crown Colonial Government, to the greater freedom of representative and self-government, not all at once, but by degrees. The mine-owners of the Rand are owners of large and valuable properties, and just as in this country great owners of property recognize that they must undertake great responsibilities, and assist in the administration of the country, so I think this company must realize that it cannot divest itself of the responsibility of assisting in the administration of local and even perhaps colonial affairs. It will probably mean an increase of the staff in Johannesburg. Time devoted to public duties is time spent away from the office, and therefore, if office

work has to be done, there may have to be more men to do it."

This seems an innocent enough utterance. The men who in America shirk this public responsibility are abused for their political indolence, and are labelled Mugwumps. But when Lord Harris suggests that the officers of a great company who are in a new and emerging country should take an interest in local affairs and devote some of their time to these, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman is up in arms, and with some sinister language tries to besmirch the advice thus temperately given. His language was rough, but as I did not take a note of it at the time, and as it has not laid hold of memory, I will not attempt to quote it here. This, however, is an indication of the fact that folk with a political heart must have that heart where their treasure is, and that in the case of Lord Harris's company, is on the Rand; and, further, it is an indication of the avidity with which home politicians will make small capital out of comparatively unimportant colonial questions. South Africa is still, it seems, to be the rope in this political tug of war in England. To suppose that persons interested in the welfare of South Africa are to sit still and see "Responsible Government" forced out of the reluctant hands of our Home administration by the Responsible Government association of Johannesburg and the Boers of Pretoria—a responsible government which would give to the Boers and those disaffected colonists "the upper hand" in the Transvaal—is absurd.

Britain has not made war and spent £250,000,000 for nothing. But to have secured predominance and then to sneak into a lower place, would be an abdication which would lose us our South African Colonies, and that would be the beginning of the end of our "Imperialist" castles in the air.

XXVII

I have spoken of the higgledy-piggledyness of this capital of the Gold Reef. All new towns which have been "run up" have the same characteristics. Here in Pritchard Street there are seven or eight story buildings which the Americans with brutal picturesqueness call "sky-scrapers," and next door to these towering stories there is a shed of a shop. But there is another aspect of Johannesburg which is more important than these snail-shells, and that is the snails that live in them—the people of Johannesburg! I saw next to no poor. It was a bustling, strenuous crowd that went about the streets, and here at any rate there are not—although it is the dearest town on earth—a large number on the verge of starvation, like the twelve millions we have heard about in Great Britain. There was not even a depressed look about the people. Yet look at the storms they have weathered. A cattle country swept by the rinderpest, that was a calamity. The oppression which came before and after the Raid, when every door, even the door of the Volksraad, was barred with gold and opened but to golden keys. The war! And yet to-day the people are again prosperous, and ten years of peace and

dips into the lucky bag of nature, will make this country rich "beyond the dreams of avarice," like Thrale's Brewery. The mineral wealth of the country has only peeped through the scrapings which have been made by human hands at Kimberley, Jaggersfontein, the Premier, and on the Rand. If statesmen will only give this marvellous mineral country a chance, it will surprise Europe in the next ten glistening years. Many travellers who come here, however, think that the mineral wealth is everything. They confine their observations to the busy money-making towns, the roar of the stamps, the huge snowdrifts of the white tailings, which, seen from a distance, look like huge marquees or flower-show tents, and do not note the rich country which lies between Bloemfontein and Basutoland; they pay no attention to the rich valleys of alluvial soil which will grow any crops and any fruit, and they don't believe in the agricultural development of the future. I do. I have gone over Jackson's Drift and up the Klip River; I have seen the ploughed land, I have seen the irrigated land, and I know what is being done on these even with dilatory agriculture. Here you scratch the land with the plough, and mealies will grow with the avidity of weeds. I have seen how fir trees planted on rockeries of kopjes will grow with their clutching roots as well and more quickly than they do in their colder home in Europe. I have seen the mimosa tree in full blossom, and I have seen peaches and apricots grow and bear in the sturdy orchards. I believe that, apart from the immense mineral resources, which are

hidden away in the cellars of earth, the business to be done on the ground floor is also gigantic. My drive of some twenty-five miles from Johannesburg up the Klip River to Zurbecom, where there was a military station to protect the Johannesburg waterworks during the war, and where the ground even now can be harvested for pom-poms and shrapnel shells, was undertaken on a fervid summer day. It is close to our destination at Zurbecom that there are the graves of twenty-seven of the Gordon Highlanders. We drove back to Johannesburg by another route, and passed the racecourse, and by that time I was a convert to the belief that, if willing hands can only be found, and stiff hearts are put to the furrows, there is a beautiful pastoral future before this country, as well as the glittering one which is to come from the yellow ground and the banket reef.

My minor experiences of the drive are unworthy of a line of print. But you should see a mimosa tree in full bloom, the young blue gums with their silver sheen and white flowers, the red gums with their crimson edges! The rich red earth and even the air was interesting. We saw some of the great white locust birds, the finch (the blacks call it the succabul), which is black and wears a crimson sash, and has such a long tail that it looks like a large dragon-fly. It wobbles in its flight so much, because of its tail feathers, that a friend of mine has aptly called it the "black rag bird." It is only fair to say of this finch with its long ungainly tail, that it is only the male bird that is so appendaged, and that he wears it only

in the "mashing" season, and when the courting is over he sheds the tail and goes about in "lounge" feathers. He has dropped the dignity of being a kind of sable comet, but he has achieved the comfort of a dressing-jacket. There was interest everywhere on this drive. Not only were we where battle had trod, but we saw clever and agile little mere cats on the veldt, and all the way I had most intelligent companions, who were never tired of administering "long drinks" of information to my thirsty curiosity. Their comradeship would have made dreary veldt miles interesting. As yet I have found nothing but acute intelligence in the country. If anything, it is too eager, and that is its only fault. I want to meet some fools to make me feel at home, but I am giving up the search—a reverse search from that of Diogenes. But besides intelligence, let me say I have met nothing but courtesy. I visited to-day a compound where there are seventy natives, and they all wore black shiny smiles. They were playing on the earth at an incomprehensible game, which is said, but upon slender information, to resemble backgammon. Some of the boys were playing football, which was excellent with the temperature at 76°. Here there is no difficulty in getting black labourers. The work is surface work and easy, and the blacks excel in that. I have come back after a sunny drive of forty miles with wrists as red and face as sunburnt as to justify the proud title of "red neck," which the Boers used to apply to the English soldiers.

XXVIII

A WEEK ago Premier Diamond mine £1 shares were at forty-nine; they are at sixty to-day. The owners of the racecourse in Johannesburg subscribed £10 each; they bought the freehold of the course, and became, to their surprise, the owners of gold land. They sold the land for mining, and that gave the five hundred members of the turf club, thousands of pounds each. A syndicate of mine-owners purchased the freehold of a farm of 1700 morgen for £26,000. They desired the land for the purpose of getting water to their mines. They sold the mining rights and the surface rights in these lands, retaining the water rights, and received the sum of £80,000 in cash for that concession. Two early speculators, before the real development of the reef, came up and had to bargain for the land of a widow. One of them would have given £500 for her rights. She wanted, as a widow had every right to want, £550; but the fortune-seeking gentleman would not budge from his £500 offer. So the negotiations ended for that night. The other gentleman, who had, I believe, the gift—if not of languages—of language, talked to his colleague that

night, and next morning they went back to the widow and made her happy with the £550 for a property which has since yielded to its owners something like £3,000,000. This shows that this is a country of dazzling romance. Tom Tiddler's ground is nothing to it, although in some cases you have to pick up the gold and silver from a depth of 2500 feet below the surface, and the reef is still dipping to the south. But stories like these authentic instances, stories which make the mouth of your pocket water, are as common here as blackberries are at home. The cases where in the "toss-up" the coin falls "tails" uppermost, are more difficult of investigation, and when probed are not exhilarating. To be in this atmosphere, where to some extent gambling is a business, makes one feel in a hurry. There is no "retired leisure" or taking sedate pleasure in this stock exchange. I feel, however, in a condition of "splendid isolation," for I never had a gold or diamond share.

Johannesburg is in strange contrast to the country round it, with its quiet farms, where it seems always afternoon. There are few fields, and where there are boundaries they are not hedgerows, but barbed wire stretched between stobs of willow. But these "stobs" begin to show leaves and branches soon after they have been put in the ground. There are in some places forbidding hedges of bayonet-like aloes, which are formidable not only on account of their points, but because they harbour snakes. But the country is quiet, with a wide sabbath look over its sunshine-lit vastness. But

Johannesburg! it is never Sunday there, or Sunday is as restless as the rest of the week. The Boers still have their religion. They observe the Bible. They search their consciences. They go to church and listen to sermons, and these are long and rousing. But the rest of the inhabitants seem to have no religion, or if they have it is not marked by any public observance. They don't read the Bible; they peruse share lists. They don't believe in Providence, but in a boom. They play tennis all Sunday. They do not know it, but they might do worse than believe in something.

One day, soon after my arrival in Johannesburg, I went to see the places from which that great and growing town will in future probably draw its increased water-supply. Not only is water a primary necessity in a place where the roads get up and blow in your face, in a country where it is always sunshine, and where the sanitary arrangements would be greatly improved (and are going to be improved) by water-carriage of refuse and proper sewage disposal, but water is as essential to the mines as labour is. For every ton of ore crushed, about 400 gallons of water are required. As a stamp crushes about five tons in a day, and there are nearly 6000 stamps at work to-day, and as there will probably be more than twice as many at work in five or six years, it is obvious, even to rudimentary arithmetic, that even now the trade will require for use something like twelve million gallons of water a day, and that the demand, both for trade and for domestic purposes, will go on increasing as the great

trade prospers. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid, and Johannesburg is nearly 6000 feet above sea-level. But besides this prominence of the high-set city, its position also makes the problem of water-supply a very difficult one. All the water that is supplied to Johannesburg has, therefore, to be pumped. It is not possible here to make large storage reservoirs, as in England, in high valleys, and to allow the water to run down to the towns, which are for the most part on river-levels. The "rand" means "a ridge." So here for the filling of our cups we are at the mercy of a steam-engine. And here, as all the wealth is mineral and is taken from the ground, so even the water has to come from the bowels of the earth. It is true there was a scheme for collecting the waters falling on and running off a small catchment area of five miles' in extent at Vierfontein. The word Vierfontein means "four streams," and it seemed a fairly good place to collect and store water. A dam was begun, but before it was finished the syndicate became aware that it would be better to get water from the dolomite formation further to the south, and the dam was not completed. All round Johannesburg to the south and west and north there is a great deposit of magnesian limestone, which is called by geologists dolomite, and by the Dutch "olephant's klip," that is, "elephant's rock," and they call it that because when it weathers on the surface the rock is not unlike the corrugated hide of an elephant. Most of the Dutch names mean something. Their name for the rock in which the

gold is found is "banket," and that is the word which is applied to Boer "hard bake" with almonds in it, and there is sufficient resemblance between the rock and the sweet to make the simile a good one. Before the water properties of this rock were known, a syndicate, as we have seen, was formed to secure for the mines the waters of the four streams, and hence their dam. Though the gathering-ground was small, their scheme was a feasible one. The Johannesburg Water Company, after some unsuccessful experiments at supply, had gone to the dolomite formation at a place above Kliprivers oog, a distance of eighteen miles from Johannesburg, and was pumping from that excellent underground reservoir nearly two million gallons of water a day to the town. As, at the time I was in Johannesburg, the question of the transfer of the three companies' undertakings to the Rand Water Board was being much discussed, on a Sunday I drove with some friends to see the site of the proposed reservoir at Vierfontein, then into the Klip valley to Oliphant's Vlei, thence to Zwartzkopies, and then on to Rooicop, to see some of the proposed sources of supply from the dolomite. My friend, who drove me in his motor-car, is not only an accomplished engineer, but he is the most accomplished motor-car driver that I ever sat beside. To that fact I owe my life. To the roads I owe my bruises. I never had such a journey on wheels. Now we were bumping over huge boulders, now we were in the trough of a rut a foot deep, now we were in the waters of a drift, now on the trackless veldt

Only half the time was I on my seat, and when, as I did frequently, I returned to it, it was with a suddenness that shook. When I was on the seat, it was a grim-death hold that maintained me in it for a minute, until one of the side wheels was upon a parapet, or the whole motor went down with a bump into a three-foot drain-like cutting across the road. And that from nine in the morning till 4.30 in the afternoon, with a blessed hospital rest of an hour for lunch by the river and under willow trees. We went over fifty miles that day, and these are even at this distance of time sore to remember. But, although I do not exaggerate the inequalities and perils of these things they call roads, I want to do justice to the friend who drove us. I never sat behind a chauffeur with more ability and resource. Had it not been for these qualities over these fifty inauspicious miles, I should not be here to tell the tale. His alertness overcame all difficulties, and these were innumerable. His quick judgment always chose the better way. But what struck me as much as his ability as a driver was the way that the ten horse-power car[1] stood the thousand strains, the jolts, the bumps, the furrows, the knotted out crops of innumerable strata. It weathered these storms magnificently, but it must have had physical memories of that sabbath day's journey, as I had. Looking back on it, and remembering how

[1] I have left the name of the car to be filled in when I know which firm of makers will give me the most for the stop-press space. You see, the commercial instinct is developing in me since I have been in Johannesburg.

near death I was on a dozen occasions, remembering how my fears, which might have been taken by some to be voiced in imprecations, were really escaping in sudden prayers, I am convinced that that Sunday was the most religious day I have had for a very long time. It was, too, a day beginning with a spring freshness, soaring into a zenith oven, and falling into clouds and thunder in the afternoon, but not to rain. A few half-crown drops came down on the roof of the stoep after we had returned in safety, but that was all. There was no shower-bath for the air, and that needed washing and cooling. But even after the hot day and the sore experiences, the air was fresh and breatheable, and the lungs drank their fill. Even then the whole sky above the Magaliesberg mountains was flushing and winking with the summer lightning, and the garden was chirping with innumerable crickets.

The veldt is not only rich—especially after rains—in summer flowers of all sorts, which are the more precious in their blooms because of the level bareness of the red earth in which they grow, but the "flowers of air"—butterflies, moths, and dragon-flies, which frequent its clear spaces of broad air—are also many to the captive eye, and float in the imagination. But my imagination is like the needle to the pole, and these flutters of wings, the pausing of the red-bodied dragon-fly over the marsh in the veldt, only make me think of the sapphire of our own gossamer-winged marsh frequenters. I am always weighing in the scales of comparison, and instead of

throwing the sword into one of the scales, as the Roman conqueror did, I throw in my heart. It is a country to glamour you; but home is the country to love, and I have found many colonial hearts of my way of thinking.

XXIX

In the old time there used to be petty tribal wars between the natives of various races employed in the mines. The men of different tribes, although all of the Bantu family, had to be kept in separate compounds, and the feuds were many, if they did not lead to very serious consequences. But there were broken heads and white plasters to show where they had been. Whilst I was in the midst of the mines there were some little coloured wars. Thus, I saw in the *Cape Argus* of November 22 a statement that, on Friday night, the 18th instant, a cold-blooded murder took place in the Chinese quarter at the Van Rhyn Compound. This seems to have been an affray between the Chinese coolies and the Chinese police. A policeman was stabbed by a coolie, while two others had their brains battered out with jumpers; a fourth was so seriously injured that he was not expected to live, and a fifth was just saved by the timely arrival of the compound manager. On Sunday, December 11, there was a battle between Chinamen and blacks. It appears that a black Helen was the cause of the strife. In the war which ensued one Chinaman and three blacks were killed. One could match these details

from Ratcliffe Highway. But here the stories are grist to the mills of politicians at home; and it is unfortunate that politicians will seize for their platform performances the picturesque details of such encounters, instead of the solid facts of the case. Such incidents have occurred in a hundred cases before. They have come to nothing of real importance under the strong hands of a vigilant police —a force which, I have no doubt, deserves an encomium as high as was conferred upon our English force by the Adolph Beck Commission, which kept its knout for the deserving Home Office. But these sensational incidents are really beside the question. Every one knows how a motor-car accident in England attracts the public eye, while you may be run over by a bus or a four-wheeler without getting any kudos out of the martyrdom. There is a microscope on the mines at present.

I have seen several of the mines and the compounds. I have seen the anthills in millions on the veldt, and Johannesburg and the Rand is only a human anthill. And what is this industry? It has been on hot-foot since 1886, and all the gold that has been got out by the busy ants of men since that time, if put into a ball, would only form a globe 15 feet in diameter. Even the industry in California, which has existed for many years, has only produced gold enough to form a globe 21 feet in diameter. But, considering the time the mines have been at work in the Witwatersrand, they have done better than those of California. Still, I suppose it was worth the trouble, although the result seems small. Nowhere, so far as I

know, has gold been got from the conglomerate banket in the same way that it has on the Rand. In other places, gold has been procured largely from quartz, and from alluvial deposits, and only the other day there was a rumour that the banket with gold in it had been discovered in Rhodesia. But rumour is a jade, with a mouth full of lies. And in this case, although there may be banket in Rhodesia, it is still a question whether the sprinkled gold in it is worth the working. Jealous Johannesburg says "no." I hope, for the sake of Rhodesia, that the answer will be "yes."

There are a great many Americans in Johannesburg who brought their experience from California and Klondyke to this new market, and one of these, being shown some quartz with gold in it, was asked what he thought of a mine that could yield that, and he answered in the deliberate way in which Americans speak, as if they had all eternity to finish the sentence, "Wall, you might just as well show me the nail of a horse's shoe, and ask me how fast that horse could travel." A graphic answer.

But it was not of Americans, who do not live in compounds, but in nice villas at Park Town, that I meant to speak here, but of the blacks and the yellows. No one should be in Johannesburg without visiting some of these large-scale bothies, and endeavouring to make up his mind on the question of the slavery of the Chinese. He ought, also, to make himself acquainted with the conditions of the industry, and the methods by which

the gold is won. As to the underground working, it is difficult to speak. All mining is, more or less, of a lucky-bag, but gold-mining on the Rand is more of an industrial venture than a gambling enterprise. It is worth while looking at the matter from that point of view.

XXX

The *Daily News*, in an article published on December 20, 1904, speaks with a "nice derangement" of epithets, as Mrs. Malaprop would have said, of the "nauseous mining brood." I have seen something of the gentlemen that the *Daily News* thus describes, and I have formed, perhaps on better information, a different opinion of them. In my view, they are intelligent, hardworking, shrewd, money-making men. They are like our own colliery-owners, cotton-spinners, and financiers, as Mr. Chamberlain said, only, if possible, with keener edge. But why they should be called "nauseous" merely because they carry on a lucrative business I fail to understand, except that envy has a foul mouth.

But the idea that Johannesburg is the "hub" of the South African wheel is, it would seem, a megalomaniacal error. If you find out, not the boom value of the mines, but the real value, a moderate 10 per cent. is made out of the Rand, and that is without allowing for a sinking fund to pay off the capital value of the mines in twenty-five or thirty years, in which time those in work may be exhausted. That is no great return when you remember that you can get 7 to 8 per cent. on mortgage for building

stands in or about Johannesburg. It is poor pay for exploiting; and if you discover that only about £11,000,000 per annum is spent out of the mining receipts on labour on the Rand, and that the dividends go away largely to Europe and America, there is little enough for this hobbledehoy town to live upon.

A gentleman that I, to some extent, as far as courtesy would permit, cross-examined, told me he had gone into this matter from the point of view of the figures, and even remembering that if facts are false witnesses figures are more so, some of his calculations bore out the view I have ventured to express above. He told me that the mines had once been valued at £470,000,000, but that to-day, or at the beginning of the year, more sane calculations had been made, and the value was put at £48,000,000. The amount of capital expended had been about £36,000,000, and the total return from the mines last year was about £21,000,000. He had, with a sleuth-hound pertinacity, calculated that the working expenses of the mines—for mining on the Rand is, in a sense, a manufacture—amounted to about 75 per cent. of the gross receipts, or about £16,000,000 per annum; of that, and here speculation came in to help the lame foot of arithmetic, he calculated that £5,000,000 went out of the country, and largely, and unfortunately, to America, for machinery and the like, and that left £11,000,000 for the white and black population of the Rand. There was, therefore, for the return on the capital value of £48,000,000, or, say, £50,000,000, exactly £5,000,000, or 10 per cent.,

and that money, as we have seen, largely found its way out of the country, and roosted in England, Europe, and America. His view was that that really was a business-like measure of the financial capacity of the mines, and according to him these were "times most bad, without the hope of better to be had," for, although the deep levels were better and would yield 10¼ pennyweights of gold per ton, the winning of these cost more money on capital account, cost more time, and were, of course, more expensive to work. The real source of increased profit to the owners was to be found in the 75 per cent. working expenses. Their chance was to decrease that percentage, and hence, in his view, the mine-owners now found virtue in favour of the liquor law, by which it is made a crime, with a heavy penalty of fine and imprisonment, to supply natives with intoxicants—and hence, too, their desire for Chinese cheap labour. His horizon, however, was bounded by the per cent. profits, and he saw and said that it was a poor return for money from a gold-mine. His own interests, I gathered, lay the other way, and he praised investments in land which would yield a return of from 6 to 8 per cent. without risk—without the risk even of being called a "nauseous brood" by the *Daily News*. Why should people be glamoured into a gold-mine when the sedate land would produce such a steady harvest?

XXXI

It is not to be doubted that there is some vehement opinion against the experimental employment of the Chinese. There are those who look for a great future for South Africa. It has a wonderful climate, but it wants men and money. The last—capital—is as essential as the labour or the sunshine. But, notwithstanding that fact, there are many who wage a wordy war against the class they call Rand lords, or, with even more refinement, a "nauseous brood." Most men who see clearly are convinced that nothing is to be done to exploit it and make it a white man's country, unless money can be induced to go there; and at the same time they scold the capitalists who have gone there and helped to the present prosperity, and hold up these to the contempt of the British reader, and charge it as an offence against them that they are on the Rand for dividends, and nothing else. I wonder what they think capital emigrates for? But these are the strange contradictory phases of political controversy.

One of the arguments used by these somewhat able preachers, is that the policy of the Rand lords, the dominant race, is to secure serf labour, so that the white

labour—the white proletariat, which Lord Milner said was not wanted in the country—may not have the upper hand of votes. Their desire, it is said, is not to have a white labouring class which can dictate to the masters in the matter of wages; which can have a powerful say in political questions in South Africa. They desire to introduce slave labour that they may outflank trades unionism. It is a war of classes, and this hireling chivalry is to fight the Rand lords' battles. Well, looking at the condition of some of our other colonies, it might well seem that such fears, if entertained by capital in South Africa, were not ill founded. But whether it is a rational dread or not, this is the uncompromising attitude taken up by many persons who call themselves impartial because they are not interested in the mines. They assert two things—that the Report of the Transvaal Labour Commission, upon which this new policy as to labour is said to rest, was the report of a "packed body," and therefore an unsound foundation; and second, that it is not true that unskilled white labour would not do the work of the mines, and these advocates point to Mr. Creswell's experiments at the Village Main Reef Mine—experiments which have been described by all who have inquired into them as failures, and experiments which have been abandoned by the owners of the mine in question. The discrediting of the Labour Commission Report is an unworthy trick.

But one curious feature of this political argument is freely developed in the articles reprinted from the *Daily*

Chronicle. The view of the writer is that South Africa has a curse—gold. That it is being sacrificed by its rulers to a clique with a lust for huge profits, and yet in a high-faluting peroration he says, "Every kopje, every valley, cries aloud for capital and skill." Does this ingenious gentleman think that the way to get the "cry" adequately answered is by crucifying the existing capitalists, by treating them as criminals, because they, like every other human being, want a return on their invested money? Does he think that skill will go where capital does not go? Such reasoning may do very well for a daily paper commissioner, but it will not convince a practical public. The practical public of South Africa have come to the conclusion that "under present conditions and cost of living the use of unskilled white labour in the mines is practically impossible." And after carefully looking into the matter, and having, as I said, no interest in any mine, I am inclined to think that that view is well founded. This is an emergency experiment. If, as is possible, large deposits of alluvial gold are found in South Africa, and tempt the somewhat undesirable digger and his satellites to the colony, the aspect of affairs might change. But at present the mining operations can only be conducted by means of large capital expenditure. To get the capital to adventure in the enterprise you must persuade it to go there. To persuade it you must show it a probability of a substantial return, and to do so you must secure it the labour which is necessary to the working of the mines.

In the present condition of sentiment it is impossible to compel the black man to do a fair day's work for a fair day's pay. It is possible that in the whole of the country south of the Zambesi there may not be a sufficient number of black boys to supply the growing wants of the mines. What, then, is the alternative? This controversialist is like all ardent advocates, a little unfair. He seems to admit that the Chinese are well fed and well housed—he even indicates that they are becoming fastidious, and ask for eggs at breakfast—eggs at 3*s.* 6*d.* a dozen. But he says on another page, "Mine-owners are far too astute to treat the first lot badly." And he admits that the "cause" in South Africa—the cause he was sent out to advocate—has not been helped by the cry of "slavery" at home. But is this a fair inference—except for the writer of articles with head-lines—the inference that in future, when there are, say, 100,000 Chinese in the country, the astute mine-owners will treat them badly? Does a selfish man underfeed his horse, or kick the dog? This suggestion is not worthy of a pen attempting to be fair.

Then his further argument is that the Chinese are a poor lot, and don't pay at the price, only doing 23·2 inches a day, while the Kaffirs throughout the Rand do 36·7 inches. This, even if it were accurate, seems futile argument. Either it cheapens production or it does not. His idea is that it is intended to cheapen production, and yet the astute mine-owners are, it seems, taking inferior workmen where they could get black men who would do

more for the same wage. Again, this, I take it, is sensational daily paper head-line writing.

Then, finally, he has a triumphant poke at the capitalists—for this is a capitalist hunt—and he says gold costs 31*s.* 2*d.* per ton to work, and its value is 41*s.* 9·4*d.* There is therefore half a sovereign of profit per ton for dividend. But the question is what the 10*s.* has to pay interest on, and our writer does not help us here.

It is therefore a far-seeing policy with which these gentlemen of the Rand are credited. They desire, it would seem, to live a dominant class in a country worked by serf labour. They foresee a time when, if white unskilled labour is introduced, the tail of labour will wag the dog of capital, and that they desire to prevent and hinder by freezing out white labour altogether, and in its place procuring the services of Chinamen at from 1*s.* to 2*s.* a day. This, of course, is contrary to the intention of the Government. Mr. Balfour said that the object of the ordinance was not to displace white labour that yellow humanity was introduced, and Lord Milner calculated that for every ten Chinamen employed there would be employment for another white man. Chinese labour was to be the means to white employment. And the facts bear out the truth of these anticipations. The Colonial Secretary, in his speech at Leamington the other day, said that Chinese labour had increased the number of white men employed by 1700. That may be true, but how it is compatible with a statement published in the same paper it is difficult to see. A Johannesburg newspaper of December 5, 1904,

contained in a letter from Lord Milner read at a meeting at Dorking on December 2, that "the introduction of 7000 to 10,000 Chinese to the Transvaal had resulted in 1000 additional men finding employment in the mines, and that 8000 to 10,000 whites were benefiting directly by the introducton of the first 7000 Chinese." But we have already given the exact statistics.

But Mr. Naylor, notwithstanding his mission from the *Daily Chronicle,* does not propose to repeal the Chinese ordinance, even if the Liberals came into power to-morrow, and thereby opens a trap-door in his platform, through which he and his arguments disappear from view. It is easy to talk "large" of the future of race problems and what not, but what we have to do with is the immediate future—"one step enough for me"—and Mr. Naylor has no practical step to propose.

XXXII

By the courtesy of some of the Rand lords, I was enabled to see some mines, some mills, and some compounds. The whole of the processes are full of interest. I dare say many people at home think that the gold is got here by digging, as in the Australian sense, or by washing, as in the Klondyke sense, but it is got by mining. The deepest mine at present worked is some 2500 feet below the surface. The rock is drilled, and by charging the drill-holes with dynamite, or some kindred substance, and exploding the charge, the stubborn stuff (banket) is brought away, taken up the shaft, and then crushed by means of stamps. From the stamps it is washed in its crushed state over copper plates where the crushings are mixed with mercury, and the mercury and gold form an amalgam. The gold is taken out of the amalgam, and, so far, the process is complete. But much gold is not extracted by this method. The *débris* has still to be treated with cyanide of potassium, and this, after standing in the great vats for about eight days, reduces the gold which is contained in the slimy *débris* to a solution. The solution is then poured over zinc, which extracts the gold from it.

The process might really be as properly called a process of manufacture as of mining.

First we saw the machinery which drives the mill—forces down air into the mine and the like; some of it made in Milwaukee, some in England. Then we went into the roar of the stamps, which is more noisy than "the far-sounding sea." The noise was deafening; speech in the presence of these pounding hammers, impossible. The day I was there, there were 300 stamps at work out of a total of 320 at that particular mine. That was even a greater number than was at work before the war, and that had been made possible by Chinese labour. In a gold-mine, from beginning to end you see no gold—until it comes to the smelting. Up to that time it is a matter of faith. But I saw much which was as interesting as gold. I saw the works, and the stamps, and the cyanide tanks, and the compounds. The old Kaffir compound was a poor place—a barrack square with houses round it. Most of the sleeping-places were without windows, and the light and air had to find its way in at the door, or at a grating over the door. The Kaffirs, making their little anklets and other wire ornaments, had to sit near the entrance to get the light. They are greatly improved to-day, and windows have been, or are being, put into all the rooms in the Kaffir compound. That has been brought about by the regulations which have been made in connection with the housing of the Chinese.

In this Kaffir compound there were 1500 blacks, and had been for years, and no English editor had gone into

literary hysterics about the slavery. But the new Chinese compound, which must, with its hospital and other appliances, have cost the company £40,000, is much better than the other; and the Chinese keep their quarters much neater than the blacks. In their sleeping-rooms the Chinamen had folded up their blankets—a thing that is very rare in the slovenly black quarters. In this compound, where there was more light and air-space than in the black compound, there were 3200 Chinese; of these, 400 were employed above ground, some of them as policemen, some as cooks. The men I saw were physically strong and healthy. In many cases they had a distinctly European cast of countenance. Some of them had the Asiatic type, and they looked lugubrious; but none of the others, so far as I could judge, looked unhappy, although, as a race, it is not as happy-looking as the black race—who grin much, even under the excruciating torture of their own concertina performances. One man I saw in a comfortable hospital who was, apparently, opium-drunk. There were very few cases of disease. The police—Chinese—in khaki, looked very smart. I saw the workmen from the mine come to the check office when they had done their "shift" in the mine. Most of them were coming up at three o'clock, although the time of the shift lasted until five, but they had done their 36 inches, and were entitled to their 1*s.* 6*d.* So up they came and got their tickets. I saw one man who had done four inches more and earned his 1*s.* 8*d.*, and I was informed that one Chinese cormorant for work did 70 inches in the

day. As yet the Chinese are not as expert as the black men were, and don't do, on the average, quite so much work, but they are learning their trade, and are apt apprentices, and, oddly enough, they and the black men work side by side in the mine together, and the blacks are teaching the yellows their handicraft. I saw the Chinamen feed. The food consisted of a mess of rice and meat and vegetables (they are fond of beans), and each man as he got his dish looked at it with a critical eye, and I saw no dissatisfaction on their sphinx-like faces. Each man brought with him a tin can for his tea, and they returned with their meal to their quarters in the compound and produced their chopsticks, and, I hope sincerely, enjoyed themselves. Some of them are taking to the more civilized and more wholesale method of feeding with the spoon. But I saw some use their fingers with gusto, and one man used his stringy hair as a table napkin—a course which I could not approve. I asked as to their vices. Some smoked opium and made themselves stupid with it. But these were the exception. There was not much, if any, gambling, but these were Chinese from the north of China. They write letters home and post them freely. They are fond of children, and there were eight children under ten years of age in the compound who had been brought over by their parents. Now, are these displacing white labour? Since the Chinese have been employed at this particular mine, the company have employed 90 more white men, and had the greatest difficulty in getting men fit for the well-paid places they

had to fill. It is the low whites about the compound that require the most looking after. It is these men who will knock the Chinese or black men about, relying—God save the mark!—upon belonging to the dominant race. It is to watch these men, and prevent their brutalities, that those who are responsible have to devote a good deal of their time. The blacks and yellows do not molest one another, there is no race hatred between them. But when we hear of making South Africa a white man's country, I remember these bleached bullies and hesitate.

I wish I could have spoken to some of these copper-coloured Asiatics, to find out what was passing in their heads; but my ignorance shamed me and prevented me. It was deep crying to deep. Were they thinking of home with a clinging regret? My heart is not in these highlands; where are their hearts, I wonder? What is the hope that leads them on, down the mine, for a ten-hours' shift? Is it only the food, which is much better than they get in their hovels at home? Is it the wages, which they are spending freely, or is it the hope of the return to China after the three years? As to their spendings, I saw one man who had acquired and was carrying with pride a blue-painted tin box. Was he preparing to pack up and go home at the end of his three years, or was this a box for his treasures, his bank? It was a nice tin box, and bright blue, but he must have done a good many inches before he could buy that box; but his heart no doubt, was in there. Were they, in this dusty summer

heat, thinking of far Manchuria, with its 20 degrees of frost? I wish I could have read their thoughts, but it was only from the blank title-page of their faces that I thought I could read that they were not unhappy, and by my own eyes that I could judge that they were not uncomfortable. That compound life is not absolute liberty, is true, but it must have its merits, for there is a black boy in the compound at this mine who has been ten years in the service of the company. He has not served continuously. He has gone away to his kraal, but he has always come back. If I had to choose between the compound and a Scotch or English workhouse, or, if you like, an asylum, I would go to the compound, notwithstanding dissuading editors. Besides, if it is as circumscribed as in the case of these institutions I have mentioned, as in the case of public schools at home, there is the big bow window at the end of three years, which looks out on the snows of North China, if they want to go back. And won't the blue box make a sensation there! If the black compound is not slavery, how is the yellow compound serfdom? They are much the same in the matter of food, except that in some mines they give the black, Kaffir beer.[1] I had an opportunity of comparing the mine compounds with the great compound of the Johannesburg corporation, in which about three thousand black men, and I don't know how many mules, are housed and fed. The work performed

[1] At one compound it costs 5¾*d.* to 6*d.* a day to feed a black man, while it costs 11*d.* per day to feed a Chinaman.

by the corporation in the removal of night-soil and refuse in disinfecting, and in other sanitary work, is gigantic, and, after careful inspection, I am convinced that it is well and ably done. But the compounds at the mines where the blacks and the Chinese are housed certainly compare favourably with the compound where the corporation house their black servants.

It is well to remember that what the mine-owners wanted was labour, and not Chinese labour. We may agree with Henry George, that all wealth is the product of labour, or we may disagree with him, but there is no question that there can be no wealth produced, indeed there can be no living without labour, and it seems natural that mine-owners desire to make their industry prosperous, although that to some fanatics seems heinous. That could not be done, as we have seen, by means of white labour. The gold reef on the Rand cannot pay for white labour. It is quite true that gold-mines are worked in Western Australia by white-men's work. But in these they get something like an ounce of gold for the ton of ore worked, which will pay the white man's wages of seventeen or eighteen shillings a day. But in the Rand they get only eight or nine pennyweight per ton, and in Rhodesia there are mines where they only get from two and a half to three pennyweight per ton. That assay will not, of course, bear white wages. But they not only could not afford white labour, they were short of black boys. They had no choice. They would have preferred black boys to yellow coolies. It is true the blacks

are uncertain. They will go away after a few months in the mine with their earnings, but on the whole they are good workmen, especially those from the Portuguese territory, and do better work than white unskilled labour. Although the Chinaman will, in my view, learn to be as good a workman, he has to be taught. He is as yet "raw." His language makes interpreters necessary. His labour, even if it is equal to the black man's, is not cheaper. He receives as good wages, as good food, and better house accommodation, than the black worker. With the cost of bringing him and sending him back, which must be put at some £15 a head, he is as dear an article to buy (let us say, out of deference to the slave theory) as the black boy, who will cost about £3 to £4 a head to procure. But the black boy may have to be replaced several times in a period of three years. Although this industry would, I am convinced, have preferred native to foreign labour, it was not to be had. It was therefore Hobson's choice. I have not spoken to any one in this country who has not admitted the necessity of the step. Some of them, to salve too sensitive consciences, have said "it was a sad necessity," but that is the whole length the opposition goes here. We know, however, what was said in England.

XXXIII

Rain, it can rain with a vengeance. We have had such a storm as would be "head-lined" in England. Only the other day three inches of rain fell in twenty-four hours. This morning we had torrential rains. The rain sounded on the tin town of Johannesburg like a thousand "stamps" working, and the lightning was incessant for a time. The whole sky was scratched with fire; and the thunder—these peals were blows of sound, and one felt one's ears black and blue, when a little silence fell on them like balm. But the storm passed away to the east, the freshness came into one's room from the grateful garden, and the sun came out and began to dry up the pools and turn Johannesburg into dust again.[1]

I fear I have not said sufficient in description of this great town. The new Rand Club was opened while I was in Johannesburg. There are six hundred members, and I should say they were all at lunch there on the second day. Although the club is not yet completed, it promises

[1] The dust of Johannesburg has been examined, and it is found to be as sharp, angular, and irritating as that taken from the mine stopes, and the mine-dust, as we know, is responsible for two of the diseases which have to answer for many deaths each year—Rock-drill pneumonia and miner's phthisis. Yet the climate of Johannesburg is mostly dust.

well in its central hall. That day there was not room to stand in a place they call the "lounge." There are two other clubs. One at the foot of Hospital Hill, called the Athenæum, which has pretensions to literature, for it has Minerva's owl for a crest. But really it is an excellent and hospitable little club. It is cool, with a shady stoep, which induces to idling, not in my experience a characteristic of the town of Johannesburg. But here, as it is literary, it is indulged in. There are idle men everywhere, and this may be their resort. I think the qualification for membership of this club is that you must have been at a public school or university in England—or you must not. Three clubs seem to be a sufficient compliment for a town. It also—for it is a pleasure-loving place—boasts an opera-house, a theatre, and a music-hall. At the theatre they were acting the *Chinese Honeymoon*, but I am informed that it had no bearing on the problem.

There are three daily papers published in Johannesburg, the *Transvaal Leader*, the *Rand Daily Mail*, and the *Star*. They seem *news*papers, and that is the first duty of a "daily." But they are addicted to head-lines, and some of these, although in the largest letters, are of the most misleading sort. "Who was it?" "Has it fallen?" "Now's the time," stare you unmeaningly in the face. I read some of the "leaders," and found them up to a fair provincial average. Like most adventures in this country, or in this part of it, I suppose these newspapers are "controlled by a group," in the public interest of course.

But I am not good at finding out who is behind the scenes in such cases. It is a little significant that the first item on the news page is "The Market." In society nothing else is talked but the market, and things and politics that affect the markets; the newspapers naturally put this before world politics.

XXXIV

In order that I might not have the criticism inflicted upon me that, like Artemus Ward, who delivered a lecture entitled "Twenty Minutes in Africa," my experience was trivial, and that I had merely seen one mine and one compound, I made a point of visiting others. At least, that cheap jibe should not be thrown at me. At one of these I was invited to go down the mine. No doubt it would have been interesting, and my ambition was fired by the statement that it was the mine Mr. Chamberlain inspected. But I changed my poltroon mind when I found that it was the same mine at which, shortly after Mr. Chamberlain's descent, the rope had broken, the cage had descended to the bottom, and forty-three natives had been killed on the spot. Of course, if this had been forty-three Chinese there would have been a general election in England. But I ascertained, further, that the manager had been tried for manslaughter (you see, in legal proceedings they still call the blacks men), and that in his defence it was proved that the accident was due to the rapid and undetected corrosion of the steel rope, that no foresight could have prevented the accident, and that no one was

to blame. I dare say he was quite rightly acquitted, but I did not want to fall in with another case of undetectable corrosion by acid of a steel rope, so I remained on the surface. I visited other compounds besides the one I have described. I saw one where practically no blacks were employed (about forty in all), and where there were 1890 Chinese at work the day of my visit. I went all through the mill, and saw the yellow brick of gold—which I could scarcely raise, and which I was told was worth £3000. I saw the white snowballs of the mercury amalgam. These moulded balls were in tubs. To raise one of these buckets meant apoplexy, and I refrained. I saw the cyanide tanks; indeed, I followed the ore in its manufacture until the gold was ready to go to the bank. This compound, which was connected with a mine under the control of an entirely different group of the "nauseous" brood of Johannesburg's gold-lords, was neat and clean. Here there were only twenty-five men in one dormitory; but of course the cubic air-space was less than where sixty slept in one room. Here, too, there was an excellent hospital, and I saw the coolies at work—and they were at work with a will. I saw a gang shovelling out the sand from a cyanide tank, and they were shovelling with more strength and "go" than any gang of English workers would, even if they had been under a ganger's eye. These men were earning two shillings a day. The manager, an intelligent man, who, of course, looked at the matter from his own point of view, said the Chinese

were better in health and strength than when they arrived, and that that was due to good food, hot and cold water on tap, and regular work. Here I was much struck by the little Chinese gardens. The coolies had been out into the veldt and had got some of the bright veldt flowers, and had planted these in tin cans and the like, and these made a little oasis in the bare barrack-yard of the compound. Now, when they take to gardening under these difficulties they are not miserably unhappy;[1] and as for their vices, they have some virtues, or they could not become friends with these innocent flowers. In the hospital at this compound there was one case of enteric. The man lay in a clean, cool bed, which was surrounded with a muslin-like curtain to keep the flies from his hot suffering. This fact struck me, for I went through the hospital of a London workhouse once, and the face of one of the poor patients was black with flies, and he was so near death that he could not raise a hand to drive them away. There was mercy in the lace-like curtain.

[1] Arrangements are being made at some of the compounds for a Chinese theatre.

XXXV

I HAVE usually seen Johannesburg from a vehicle—for every one drives here—but the way to become acquainted with any place is to go on foot. One day I really studied the town. In the morning I went to the highest point of this exceptionally high town, a point at the Yeovil reservoir 5960 feet above sea-level. This is the vertebræ of Africa. A little further to the north-east there is a very diminutive meteorological observatory. From this hill the view is very fine. The Bezuidenhout valley with Doornfontein is at your feet. The Rand, with its white heaps of tailings and its flags of smoke, is stretched out before you to the horizon east and west. The grand Magaliesberg range is a panorama of hills away to the north. You are now above the business, above the dust, above the greed, of Johannesburg, and the town looks its best. Afterwards, not through the telescope of clear air, but through the microscope of nearness, I saw something of the town. I walked through some of the streets. I had thought that Commissioner Street and Pritchard Street exhausted the town. But I was wrong; there were other groups. A witty visitor said he could not see Commissioner Street for Jews' noses, but the statement is

exaggerated. I made the acquaintance of Joubert Park; the overawing fort, now a prison run on somewhat squalid lines; of a location on the way to Paarls Hoop, or Langlaagte, where that uncanny visitor the plague had been recently in awful evidence. I did not wonder that there had been a condemnation of a certain area as unfit for human habitation. I think the executive might, for health's sake, have used a larger sponge to this congeries of rotten biscuit-tins. But, on the whole, the first impression, of a town made in a hurry, of wealth made in a hurry flowing without the careful guiding hand of taste for its irrigation works, remained with me. Much has to be done. The country wants time, and it requires to take time. What we ought to pray for is that it should, as the Scotch say, "Ca' canny," and hope that its booming days are over, and that the steady march of progress has begun.

XXXVI

Railways—more railways. The fact is, Africa is too large. Johannesburg and Rhodesia suffer because they are so far from the sea. If the Witwatersrand or Middleburg coalfield had been as near the sea as the Rhondda Valley is, they would have been doubly endowed with minerals and transit. But where we have such an extent of territory the necessity for railways becomes urgent. Gold may be able to get to the coast; coal from Dundee is shipped at Durban for bunker purposes; even copper, which is found near the Limpopo, may overcome the difficulty of long railway carriage and high freight; but less valuable products will be tied to the place of their production, or tethered with the short rope of railway rate. I have some experience of the railway question, as it puts itself to you in England. Here the question is different, but urgent. That lands require not only water, but railways for their successful and profitable cultivation, is not to be questioned. Farmers want, not farms only, but markets. Out of the £35,000,000 which was raised after the war, some £12,000,000 was, I think, spent in acquiring the railways.

The policy of the State was to become the owners of these roads. Well, there is something to be said for State railways. But now it seems that a change has come over the policy. The whole of the £35,000,000 has been spent, and more railways are wanted. Now the Government propose to grant concessions to companies and individuals to make railways. One great firm has been bargained with. It is to raise the money for constructing the railway, and to enjoy a preference in connection with the carriage of its coal for fifteen years. Beggars must not be choosers, and even begging governments who desire other people to finance their enterprises must pay for the money.

Talking of railways and railway politics, there was quite a little breeze in the country while I was there. A line had been promised from Rustenburg through Krugersdorp to Johannesburg. Then a change came over the view of the Inter-Colonial Council, the Rustenburg line was to be carried to Pretoria, and Krugersdorp was to be left out in the cold. That was more than Krugersdorp could stand, and the inhabitants in meeting assembled, protested. The Chamber of Commerce of Johannesburg was also loud-mouthed. Lord Milner telegraphed, suggesting a postponement of the Krugersdorp meeting and an interview. The interview was assented to, but a telegram will not stop a meeting in full "spate," and it was held, and somewhat peremptory resolutions were passed. How this tea-cup storm passed I do not know. But the moral is, that the

country requires more railways, and cannot get them unless capital can be got to settle there. And yet there are some short-sighted people who want South Africa to turn the cold shoulder to money and men who have it.

XXXVII

There was quite a sensation in Johannesburg one day while I was there. Of course, there were sensations every day, for the market was strong—there were no long faces, nothing but a tendency to broad grins. Men who had been absent from the honey-pots returned. The clubs were full; you were asked what you would have to drink. You knew then that things were better. Of course, these were sensations, but the one that I especially refer to was the black rumour that Lord Milner was about to resign. Some one had had a private letter from some one else, and reading between the lines, it made it certain. Here was a calamity. It would deprive the Liberal party of their only policy in South Africa, which is "the recall of Lord Milner." How would they save their poor faces now if Lord Milner slipped through their fingers? They would in every respect have to continue the policy of to-day on precisely the same lines. This was very mean of Lord Milner. Luckily, the rumour has not been confirmed, but it is quite certain that his Excellency will not give a new party the chance which it craves. This is not the place to estimate the worth of a great public servant —time will do that when his hard office is filled by a

mediocrity. He is a man of work, of sense, of will, and if ever there was a country that requires government by strength and integrity, it is South Africa to-day. Sunnyside is not the place for a fool. But I would like to see how the Liberals, when they get the power, will replace the strength and wisdom of Lord Milner, who will, I suspect, be only too willing, after his long term of arduous work, to be "repatriated."

XXXVIII

One day, as in duty bound, I visited Pretoria, leaving Johannesburg on a perfect summer morning, and crawling by train *viâ* Germiston to the capital of the Transvaal. It is not an interesting journey at the best of times, but when the thermometer stands at 80° in the shade it is trying. There is a standing feud between Pretoria and Johannesburg as to their climates. Johannesburg, rather a boastful town and always jingling its money in its pockets, says it has the finest climate in the world. Pretoria admits that in its nest of hills it is hot in summer, but in winter its climate is perfect. No one who has lived in Pretoria, you are told, would care to reside in Johannesburg. This quarrel about their weather is perennial. Approaching Pretoria through the green hills, crowned by red forts, we saw a grove of mimosa trees in full flower, golden to the finger-tips; and the sky scenery, returning in the breathless evening, with its crimsons and purples, its yellows and its blues, was sufficient to take one's æsthetic breath away. I have seldom seen a more lavish sunset. But so far, we had only arrived at the town in its hole in the hills—a hole which was too hot that day. By the courtesy of a gentleman, whose

acquaintance was one of the objects of my visit to Pretoria, we had a pleasant lunch, and I made the acquaintance of one that, if time had permitted, I would have liked to call friend. I was entertained—— As I am not an "interviewer," I have no right to make "copy" of my host or the pleasant people round his luncheon table. By his kindness, I was conducted over the Law courts, a rather handsome structure with a fine, cool, shady central hall, and in all its corridors a conservatory of coolness. In Sir Richard Solomon's room I saw all the "Law Reports" in irreproachable calf. I saw two of the judges trying a case with witnesses, as if the case had had the importance of a trial at Bar. I am told that they mostly have three judges upon such trivial occasions, while similar actions are tried at Johannesburg by one judge. They have evidently a margin of judge power at Pretoria. It was of one of these most learned judges, whose acquaintance I did not make (the country, like Ireland, swarms with absentees), that it was said that no one questioned the conscientiousness of his decisions, but what they took exception to was the indecision of his conscientiousness. It may be a libel, but it is witty.

Having tasted the law courts and made the pleasant acquaintance of a gentleman who occupies the same relation to the Attorney-General there, that the Advocates Depute do to the Lord Advocate in Scotland, we then set out to see the town. The square is a square with an old and ugly church in its centre. The church is now

being taken down, and a day or two after our visit a portion of the tower fell through the organ—a rift which would make its asthmatical music mute. They say it is being taken down because it is unsafe. Most churches are unsafe in our days, even financially unsafe, like the United Free Church.

The town has none of the staring, dazzling, tailing heaps which assault the eye in Johannesburg. It is more a town of little shops and residential suburbs. We went and saw Kruger's house, now the "Presidency Hotel," a house which indicates the late President's pretentious modesty. Then to the racecourse, where there were at one time seventeen hundred British prisoners, the results of "regrettable incidents." One of these ingenious persons wriggled an escape from this prison in a way which has become historic. We saw Proclamation Hill, and then drove through the green and flowering suburbs on the other side of the town. Here it was all gardens. Oleanders were blooming everywhere. Huge palms fanned Government House. There was a green shade in many places lighted with the Chinese lanterns of flowers—flowers of which I do not know the names, but they looked at me, and I have them in memory. This is to Johannesburg what Washington is to New York. I think it well that the quiet seat of government should be removed some miles from the "madding crowd." I liked to see the hills *round* the town, for that was like home. There we don't build our towns on the camel-humps of ridges.

On the way back to Johannesburg, four or five Boers came into the carriage with us. My ears pricked, but they for the most part talked a language beyond the reach of my eavesdropping. Still, I was anxious to understand, and some water dripped from their flowing rone into my bucket. There was one typical Boer with a reddish beard, who had very little English, but was eloquent and gesticulating in Dutch. He had been a commander, and had led the Boers of the Wet laager—there was great amusement over that, so I took it that there was an ambush joke in it, probably referring to drink—and who claimed to have secured the victory at Spion Kop, which I believe in history's ledger has been wrongly credited to another account. I know that the Boers were, according to him, retreating when he waved them on, said it was life or death, and that then they climbed the hill ("Do you call it 'climbed'?" he asked of an English friend), and the British scooted. There was another rather thick-necked Boer, with a red face, who was "firmer on his pins" so far as English was concerned. He greeted uproariously "Erasmus," a big man, and pulled him into the carriage and made him sit down, and the story of Spion Kop was gone over again, and the leader of the commando, with great movement of the arms and slapping of his friends' knees, "showed how fields were won." The English-speaking Boer had been a scout, he told me, for ten months, under Lucas Meyer, and, from his showing, he had put Lucas Meyer right on many occasions. Lucas Meyer was, according to him, a

brave man, but no general. They were all merry and excited over these reminiscences, which might, had I understood them more, have been gall and wormwood to my pride; but as it was, I took them in good part. I had met many soldiers at home who had seen less fighting than this leader of the "nach" or "wet laager," who had been even more scathing in their criticisms, and I remembered having heard the recitation of "Bill Adams," of how "me and the Dook of Wellington won the battle of Waterloo." These Boers, or one of them, had a farm on which gold had been found, and he was quite alive to the new situation. But they were, on the whole, excellent gentlemen of a rough-cast type. They reminded me of Scotch farmers. They are, as I know, a law-abiding people. The crime which is dealt with in the handsome courts I had seen at Pretoria, and the make-shift palace of justice in Johannesburg, was crime committed by blacks and blacker whites, not by Boers. I don't suppose that, with memories of war so recent, they love us; but I think for the most part they are prepared to settle down with us, if the vaulting ambition of certain leaders who demand responsible government will leave them alone. Although they can make their scrambling war well, they don't like it; they like their farms, their heavy leisure, their slow wives, and their children. One of them showed me a photograph of his plump son, "seven months old," which he had in his bag; and I congratulated him. It is that good tough stuff that citizens are made of, far more than out of the mercurial speculator

in gold claims or the exploiter of diamonds. It only wants a spell of peace to make them loyal in heart—as loyal as the French Canadians are to-day. The pride in Spion Kop is no unworthy memory. I liked my Boer companions better than a carriage full of "spry" Englishmen. Veneer is vulgar.

XXXIX

If you look carefully at the barometer and the thermometer, you will discover that South Africa never can be a white man's country in the sense in which England or the State of Massachusetts is. It is quite true that people praise the climate, perhaps on the principle that we praise those most who have most need of praise. But there are some facts which stagger our convictions in that respect. Lungs and hearts which have been accustomed to a barometer at from 29° to 30°, are tried by one at 24° to 23°. A thermometer at from 32° Fahrenheit to 50° or 60° our blood understands, but when it is up at 80° or 90° we deliquesce. Now, it seems to be a fact that in all tropical or sub-tropical countries, Englishmen and Americans and even Dutchmen, if it was not in their slow sturdy nature before, get lazy, not, I think, because there is any moral change in them, but because, physically, the frame which has attuned its muscles to temperate skies is out of tune in the tropics. I do not say that the Englishman does not think in the Transvaal, but he does not "work" with his muscles, and in that he is like the Dutchman. Col. de Villebois

Mareuil, who had exceptional opportunities of observing the Boers, says in his book, a series of snapshots of a desultory war, "The climate here limits activity; one has to make a greater effort than in Europe to produce an identical result. Walking is painful; the legs become weak; physical labour cannot be continued without great determination. One cannot deny that there is physical depression." And on another page he says, "The Boer oscillates during his life between journeys and repose." I do not say that the white man can do no physical labour, but he does it with difficulty. His past has apprenticed him to places where results can be attained with more moderate exertion. He can overlook others at work, he can manage, devise, scheme and the like, but there is in all such climates a physical disinclination to continuous muscular exertion. The Dutch sit on their stoeps and see the African do the work. Johannesburgers cannot walk. Once a week they may play tennis upon red courts made of live ant-heaps—I wonder what anti-vivisectionists would say to that—but they are incapable of sustained muscular effort, and it is because of that fact that white labour in the mines, as a permanent expedient, is impossible. But the same statement is true of all tropical or sub-tropical countries. Take the tropical states of America, where slavery had its not uncomfortable home. There the white man can command, but not work. Since slavery has been abolished they have re-introduced into these states a kindred institution. They compel the blacks to work when they

are convicted under the long arm of the vagrancy laws.[1] It is this curious physical condition which negatives the probability of South Africa being a white man's country in the ordinary sense of the word. Here we can be nothing but a conquering, a commanding, a governing class. There is not any real foundation for the belief in a race antipathy between the dark and the fair race. It is said that a white man will not do the work of the black man, and that if he does he loses caste. It it is the caste of nature he loses. He is one of the conquerors. He never can be on an equality with the native who is hand and glove with the climate. I believe the Chinese, who call us foreign devils, have more contempt for the white man than the black man has. Indeed, the black man has many good qualities. He has a happy disposition, his features are always running to an oily grin; he desires to go and talk to "Mama;" he likes to get back to the kraal, and there to indulge in lounging leisure. All these things, although some of them stand in the way of employers who want "hands," are to his credit. But his race has been under these tropical conditions for centuries. His skin shows it. He can labour in the heat of the day, the white man cannot.

A similar problem has been raised for solution in the hot regions of Queensland, where there are sugar plantations to be worked. For a long time these were worked

[1] In the ironworks of one large firm in a Southern State no fewer than 2000 convicts, which are leased from the State, are employed.

successfully by Kanaka labour. But Australia had got an idea that its continent should be a white man's continent, and that the labour on these plantations should be kept for white men. This policy was run under the banner inscribed with "White Australia." The plantations which had indentured Kanaka labour were allowed to work with that low-class labour to the end of the term in the indenture, but after that only white men were to be employed. It was an ideal policy, but it has failed. The whites cannot work the plantations, and Queensland will probably take some extreme measures in the direction of secession if it is not allowed to solve its own local labour problem for itself, if it is coerced by the sentiments elsewhere as to the employment of the servants that are essential to its life and its prosperity. We may learn something as to the labour problem in South Africa from the results of this sentimental experiment in Australia. But there are physical laws which regulate these things, and our Statute Book must not try to reverse these.

XL

There is only one colony in South Africa that has not got a problem, and a problem to a country is like a thorn in the flesh of a Christian; it makes for uneasiness and discontent. The only problemless colony is Natal, and it is prosperous and happy. It has agriculture, it has sugar plantations, it has coal pits and a port, and if these and a good deal of coolie labour will not make a country happy, nothing will.

One might have thought that Rhodesia was too young to have a "problem," but I suppose it is the fashion in countries as it is in plays. The problem in Rhodesia is one of loggerheads between the Chartered Company and the inhabitants. Just as in the Transvaal, the problem of government is the handing over responsible government to the whites, many of whom are Boers, and many of them undesirables; just as in Cape Colony the problem is one of struggle between the English and the Bond; so here in Rhodesia there is a question between the people and the Chartered Company. Rhodesia adopted the constitution of Cape Colony, and consequently here the black men have votes. So, of course, have the blacks in Virginia; but the exercise of the franchise by these there, is largely

qualified by a free display of revolvers at the polling booths. It is wonderful how despotism is tempered to the shorn serf by assassination; and so free institutions may work well, even in a country where the blacks predominate, if the whites use force. The problem seems, however, to be getting acute in this rich province. It began with inflated prospects. It has been over-built in the towns, over-capitalized, and over-machined (the batterus, mining plant) in the mines and works, and the results have hitherto been disastrous. Rhodesia thought it was going to be a second Rand, and the Stock Exchange won't look at it. They invent stories from time to time to amuse and excite the capitalists, but they have been "once bit," and although the recent discovery of banket may be believed in, the question whether the gold is in it in sufficient quantities to make it worth working, is still undetermined. The gold in Rhodesia, up to the present, has not been found in ascertainable quantities. It is found in pockets, and is, in a sense, a lucky bag, while it is a business in Johannesburg.

Agriculturally, Rhodesia has a prospect, although in this direction it has its plagues to fear—the rinderpest, horse-sickness, and coast fever. Under these circumstances the people turn upon the sanguine Chartered Company and rend them. Of course, the Company had given the country a legislative council. That is an excellent thing for home consumption, but as the Company could always outvote the elected members, the boon was not so great as it seemed. Now when

the people have very little power and a big deficit, when the Company wants to be paid back £5,000,000 they have spent, and to raise another £3,000,000, which is to be expended in developing the country, it is not surprising that at a recent conference at Salisbury the delegates of the people declared their conviction that no progress could be made in Southern Rhodesia so long as the Chartered Company had any control of public affairs. The simple problem is, What is to be done? The people want to govern themselves. But there is a mere sprinkling of whites, some 12,600, to a large black population, some 591,000. How is the handful to rule? It has been suggested that Rhodesia should be annexed to the Transvaal, but that is quite an unpalatable proposition to the people of Rhodesia. Others say that it should be made a Crown Colony, but the name Crown Colony is not liked in South Africa. Many complaints are made of railway rates, the lines here being in the hands of private enterprise. But that "high rates" are ruining the country is the belief of every country that has railways. The real solution of the problem here, is a solution that only time can effect. If they will only go slow they will go far, but they are all in such a hurry in South Africa. If they can only live with the British South Africa Company in the meanwhile, if they will think more of developing their great resources by the direct means of industry instead of the indirect means of politics, if they will be content to look to thrift for their wealth instead of to booms, all may yet be well with

Rhodesia. Men with cool heads and clear eyes can see a great future for the colony. In our view diamonds will be found. Already copper is being developed. The Victoria falls will attract tourists. I believe that the plague period is past, and that agriculture will flourish. And I was not at all surprised to hear, on excellent authority, that Rhodesia has the finest climate in the world.

XLI

OF course the equality of all men in the sight of God is a cardinal principle of the Christian religion, which common sense will not swallow. Here, while that is the foundation of the law, there are many instances in which, as we have seen, the fundamental doctrine is not acted upon. Black men are not free to drink spirituous liquors. There is, too, in this free country a bye-law by which niggers are not allowed to walk on the side-walks. Well, that, it is true, is not much of a hardship, for the road is generally better than the footpath. But, of course this is the small end of the tyrannous wedge, according to some. There is now a proposal made to prohibit black men riding on bicycles on the streets. I wonder how he is to get about at all? In railway trains, "of course" they are not allowed to travel in the same carriage as the white man. Yet the black boy sits in a gig or buggy beside the millionaire's white daughter. These anomalies still exist.

At one mine I visited, a Mr. G—— was the manager. He was an American, and, I believe, was an able man, and he had a lynx eye. He was, however, a bit of a martinet, and kept excellent order in the mine and

compound. The sjambok, ornamented with brass wire, which he always carried, was more for show than for use. (Perhaps it is a little bit of affectation, like the small cane which a distinguished officer even bears with him into a drawing-room.) But this mine manager has method. There was a servant of the company he served who was, in the view of the directorate, an undesirable, and the managing director was anxious to get rid of him. Some one advised him to give Mr. G—— only a hint, and, he added, "That undesirable, I guess, will be homesick for a place he has never seen." I am given to understand it worked, so Mr. G—— has, probably, a sjambok in his character.

There are chestnuts in Africa, and perhaps that is one. But here is another. A Hottentot was going to be hanged, and they asked him how he would like to spend his last moments. Not being a hypocrite, and not having a prison chaplain's eye upon him, he said he would like to smoke, and they humoured him. He smoked industriously until it was time to draw the ugly cowl over his face, shortly to be distorted by its last expression, and then, with a long puff, he put the pipe down in a corner of the scaffold. The horrible ceremony was proceeded with, and just before the bolt was drawn a reprieve arrived in the nick of time. The cap was taken off, his pinioned arms were freed, and he stooped at once and picked up his pipe. He tried if it was alight, but it was out, and he said, bitterly, "that with all their tomfoolery they had let his pipe out." As I say, I cannot vouch for

the story, but it has some inherent credentials. I was told another, which illustrates, if it is true, the wealth-hunger of this great province of the empire. A friend of mine bought in a shop a copy of Hazlitt's "Essays," and the gentleman who stood by him while he made the purchase asked, "What on earth are you going to do with that?" The books in this country are mostly novels. There is only one pursuit—stocks and gold, and the man who succeeds in the quest is thought highly of; the man who fails, even to the charitable, is "a rotter." I have known cases where conscience led to failure, and where the want of it has been a highway to Park Lane. That is where good South Africans go to when they die to the colony. Here is an instance which has to do with diamonds. Cecil Rhodes said that £5,000,000 was the annual capacity of the world to absorb diamonds. That was the saturation point of society. Where the art of the diamond trade comes in is in the sorting. If you see, as you can in Johannesburg or Kimberley, hundreds of diamonds, amongst them there are almost as many sorts or kinds of diamonds, and it is in the sorting out of these that the skill comes in, and much time has to be expended in making the selection. Now for the not very creditable story. It is said that a certain diamond king heard that another great financier had a very fine lot of diamonds. He threw himself in the latter's way, and said he would like to see his diamonds. "Come away," said the other, unsuspecting, on this occasion, for once in his life, and he led the diamond king into his safe place, where all the

diamonds had been sorted. "Magnificent!" said the great man when he saw the diamonds, and he added, "I say, let us see the lot in a bucket," and his friend humoured him, and the diamonds were swept into the bucket. Robert Louis Stevenson's water-bucket, which stood beside the wall at night, "was half full of water and stars," but here was a bucket half full of stars. The great man, like a child, seemed to bathe his hands in the millions, and then went away and placed his own diamonds on the market, while his obliging competitor was delayed for a long time, because he had to have his diamonds sorted again, and then he came too late, for the public had absorbed the £5,000,000 worth. Now, that story is told with gusto. I myself would not like to have diamond kings for my friends if they do such things. But the moral tone here is not high. Every one will tell you that the State was corrupt in Boer hands before the war, but I suspect it takes two to make a corrupt bargain. When the mine-owners desired a certain law to pass at Pretoria, did they bribe? If they did, they have the excuse that the necessities of the trade made the repeal of the restriction absolutely necessary. So money went to Pretoria, and was discreetly distributed, and the measure became law. I believe—although I need scarcely say no amount of cross-examination can get at the inner conscience—that these men fear and anticipate that, through the steps of representative and responsible government, the rule of the Boer will return. The Boers know what they want, and these are the kind of people

to get it. It may be slowly, but surely. The whites in the Transvaal are divided. Many of them may side with the Boers against the Progressives, and so the British race is weak before the ballot-box. Many able men have informed me that it will come; some, who temporize, want, as they say, "to postpone the evil day." The hope of those I have been in contact with is, that the Boer would not, in power, prevent the employment of Chinese labour. They would tax—they would blackmail the gold lords, and I believe the gold lords are prepared to revert to the practices of corruption that existed before the war. The Boers have a motto, "If weak—scheme." And if the mine-owners lost the power, they would, I fear, bribe. The moral atmosphere of the Transvaal is one in which corruption would grow, as fungi do in the dark damp of a cellar.

There is one labour problem that I have not touched upon, and that is the question of domestic service. A German hairdresser in Johannesburg told me he would not think of going home. "Here," he said, "you have a few pounds in your pocket, there a few pennies." The cook of a friend, an excellent cook that he had brought from England with him, declined to return with him. She was going to better herself. A lady friend said she was at her wit's end. She paid £12 a month to her cook, and she was sure she would not be able to keep her. The bachelors of Johannesburg, she said, spoiled the domestic servant market. A lady, with whom I lunched, told me that their servants cost £850 a year.

Her cook got £12 a month, and an Indian who waited £7 a month, while in India he would have earned £1 a month. "The fact is," she said, "living is so expensive that we have to spend our whole income." But they were doing it royally. Even in these quarters the race question puzzles. There was, while I was in the country, a meeting at Potchefstroom to express disapprobation (with, I think, the adjective "extreme") and censure on those property-owners who, for the purposes of gain (that, you see, is a crime in South Africa), rent stores and land to Asiatics, thus depreciating the value of adjoining property (there human nature comes in), and aiding the coolie in unequal competition. Now, the Indian is our own fellow-countryman, and it is true he is largely employed in South Africa, but here is what Mr. Loveday said at the meeting—"They had already more blacks in the country than they could conveniently govern, and it would be well if maudlin gentlemen across the sea remembered that South Africa was not in the sweetest of tempers at the present time (cheers). Those who had been in arms against one another, would be as one in keeping up the barrier in self-preservation."

From this I can gather that neither is the temper of South Africa sweet, nor its manners good at the present time. I do not stop to inquire who the maudlin gentlemen across the sea are. But here again you have the question of a white South Africa cropping up. There are many Indian coolies in the country. The waiters at the clubs, the men who sell provisions on railway

platforms, servants in private houses, and, so far as I could observe them, they did their work well. They are deft, quiet servants. But here we find that an Asiatic who competes with a white man is resented; that the man who sells or rents land to him for gain is looked upon as a traitor; and that his competition with white men is regarded as unequal. It is the same question everywhere. In South Africa, in America, in Australia, and in England. For we at home, will we not have an Aliens Bill again in the ensuing session?

XLII

It is the sky that is the best feature of this high table-land of Africa. Any one could tell from looking at its rocky knuckles that this was a mineral country. Everywhere the rocks are "out at elbow," and you can study geology everywhere, while at home you have to resort to where a quarry has made a wound in the hillside, or a railway cutting has sliced the country. But although the threadbareness of the land is, to some extent, repellent—for even the beautiful veldt flowers, which light the land, grow upon bare arid places, and, it is not as at home, when on a summer morning "you cannot see the grass for flowers"—still, the skies never disappoint. The sunshine is spread, like a cloth of gold, everywhere, and it is sunshine which makes the minimum of shadow. Even when the brows of the heaven darken and indigo clouds loll round the horizon, there is the redeeming illumination of the lightning flash. It is true when that is the sky's condition you have rain, and the drops will splash through your clothing, and drum like drum-sticks on the roof. In a very short time the streets have become red rivers, and the water sweeps down these, making this arid town for the nonce a sudden Venice. But these

tantrums do not last long. The clouds are huddled away behind the horizon, the blue sky is again over all, the sun comes out and begins to scorch again, the floods subside, and the Rand is, like Ararat, the first dry of all the peaks after the downpour. But you should see the gardens hold up their heads after these watery events happen. All the gardens in Johannesburg have a new look. The hedges of some kind of gum tree have grown four feet high in two and a half years. But everything looks recent in this town, which is not out of its teens. As I say, all the contents of the garden ground rejoice when the rain has fallen. It is because they are total abstainers so long that when they get a chance they drink deep. If you bring away no other impression from South Africa, you cannot come without the abiding one of its beautiful skies, its soft fresh morning, and its breathing sweetness after rain.

XLIII

Land settlement for South Africa was the happiest idea, but it has had the sorriest results. The State, we know upon authority, fares ill "when wealth accumulates and men decay," and it fares even worse when all the wealth is derived from one source or industry, and when that industry is of a precarious nature like gold-mining. To apply the men to the land, that was the problem; and the Government, which tries its hand at everything in these days, put its hand very deep into the tax-payer's pocket for the purpose of Imperial settlement in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony. I believe that something like three millions have been spent in an endeavour to plant Englishmen and Scotchmen and their families on the Crown lands, but the results are ridiculously and disproportionately small. A few farms are in the hands of Englishmen and colonials, who have come from other South African colonies; a few of the farms thus offered have tempted royalist farmers from Cape Colony, who had been under the boycotting rule of the Bond, to move further north; but the real land settlement cannot with any propriety of language be said to have begun. The farmers who were offered farms,

and who were expected to be small capitalists with from £300 upwards, were not like the Dutch in their own country and at home. They were all sojourners in a strange land. They came here, and were willing to settle with the same idea that actuates every one in South Africa of British, German, or American extraction—the idea of making money. If they had been content, like the Dutchman, to live on and by their farm, to enjoy their afternoons on their stoeps, to see the black man do the work as the Boer does, then here Government offered them a paradise; but to make a farm pay you must give the farmer a market as well as a farm, and that element was left out of the settlement scheme. One hears on various hands, of men who have made an honest effort to farm profitably for as much as two or three years, who are throwing up their farms on the ground that it is not a farming country. There is something wrong in this, for the land only wants water and a little labour, and it becomes a garden. Anywhere it will, if you will plant rightly, grow potatoes and apples and apricots and pears and figs. Mealies will, if you will let them, grow like a weed. Tobacco, cotton, almost anything will grow. It is not the land that is at fault, it is the men. It is in the country as in the towns, all the people talk of "going home." Even people who have never been in England use that dear word. It has become the fashion of the southern continent. I don't think any such phrase is in the mouth of Canada. They have warm hearts there for the old

country, but Canada is home. When the men who work in South Africa are men who have been born in it; when the deep roots of association have got their hold upon the land; when the populations are no longer mere birds of passage, here to-day to make a fortune and gone to-morrow to spend it elsewhere; when people who from South Africa visit England, talk about going home when they turn their faces to the South; then there will be a chance for land settlement, for I believe the first and best tie of the farmer to the land is not what he can make out of it, but that he likes the life, loves the land, and enjoys the employment. That this class, if it could be created, would be a real human backbone for the country is not to be doubted. At the present time the vertebræ in the Orange River Colony and the Transvaal is the Boer population. It will take time to create an English people with its roots in South African soil. The experiments which have so far failed have shown that such a population must be "born, not made." We must wait until the children of the colony have become the men of the colony. It is a long time to look forward to in a colony, which is nothing if it is not impatient.

XLIV

The law's delay is known at home, but it is suffered here. The Supreme Court rises on December 1, and resumes business on March 1. But I had not time to follow the intricacies of their legal system, or the niceties of Roman-Dutch law, although I visited the fine courts at Pretoria. One of these, where summonses were disposed of, and in which advocates appear in gowns, even in hot weather, is large enough for a *court in banc* or a *cause célèbre*, and is very different from the crowded scramble of Judges' Chambers up Chancery Lane. But I had an opportunity of being present at the proceedings of a Special Tribunal appointed to determine what was to be paid by the Rand Water Board for the three water undertakings, which were purchased under the Ordinance of 1904. Deliberation was not the name for the progress made. When the tribunal sat, no one seemed ready to go on. The most distinguished members of the South African Bar were there, representing various interests, but although the tribunal wanted to "push on" to a finish, the counsel had "no instructions." They could not cross-examine, they would do their best to put in an answer in a week,

and really ample time now, would save time in the end. Every one knows the cogent reasons for delay—and as a fact a snail's progress would be a poor simile to illustrate the rate at which, with long pauses, that inquiry proceeded. Witnesses of great importance had not left England, because they had not been asked to do so. Other witnesses were "all over the place," which, I take it, referred to geographical matters, and not to their coveted testimony. They, the Water Board, were getting up alternative schemes as the case went on, and so the matter dawdled on, to the satisfaction of all, I dare say, except those who had to pay the expenses of such costly waste of time. But I am told this is the way in South Africa. They seem to act on the motto that it will be "all right on the night," a piece of wisdom which, in my experience, was a very dangerous philosophy in the case of private theatricals. In the theatricals of courts I cannot conceive that it works better. I have no doubt that that tribunal is still sitting.

XLV

I HAD a most interesting, if far too elaborate, lunch one day at the Gold Fields Hotel with several gentlemen who had all held distinguished positions, either in court or camp, under the Boer Government. Their names are household words amongst the inhabitants of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony, but as I was the guest of one of them, I have no right to repeat them here. I complain of the lunch because my host had ordered too much for us. It was an elaborate dinner, with asparagus, pine apple, ice, and what not, at half-past one. The waiters were black, but they did not make the room look so sombre as the flies. They were in thousands. One Indian waved a table-napkin over my head, which led to temporary immunity from these nuisances, and may have added to my dignity. The gentlemen I was dining with were pleasant and intelligent. They conversed like well-informed Englishmen who had grappled with affairs. One, a distinguished general and lawyer, was at the time reading Henderson's "Life of Stonewall Jackson." We discussed various matters, and it was hard to believe that these men had had their hands at Britain's throat only two

or three years ago. I had a real sympathy with men who had baulked ambitions for their memories, and who were yet as courteous to me as if we had fought on the same side in the war which cancelled their hopes.

My host told me that they must have self-government,[1] but assured me that it was not to be used as a means of war on England. I suggested to him that if it were conceded by England, the Dutch population might use it as means to the realization of their hope—which cannot be dead—of independence. He assured me that it was out of the question. They had had enough of war. They would not use their power for supremacy. This argument, however, may have been nothing but the "white flag" of earlier days. I do not trust their hope, although I believe he spoke in excellent good faith.

Only the next evening I dined with a gentleman who had been a distinguished member of the Reform Committee at the time of the Jameson Raid, and who had suffered for it. There never was a more childlike revolution than that, and had not the consequences been so serious, the brave play of the little tin soldiers, the distribution of a handful of arms at the offices of the Consolidated Gold Fields of South Africa, would have been as

[1] I see that the demand for this has been publicly and peremptorily made by General Louis Botha since I left South Africa. A concession of responsible government such as they ask at the present time would be egregious idiocy upon the part of Britain. They will look in vain for such foolishness even to the party which is led by Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, notwithstanding what he said at South Queensferry the other day.

good a farce as ever was played on the great and generally solemn stage of history. Nothing gives me a lower opinion of Africa's one strong man, or the astuteness and ability of the people of Johannesburg, than this burlesque fiasco. My friend and his wife gave a dinner-party at a club, and we sat down, some twenty, after a thunderstorm of enormous magnitude in sound. The whole of the north was its theatre, and the great banks of grey cloud were piled on the Magaliesberg hills, and the grumbling of the clouds to these was incessant. But every now and then a lasso of light was thrown over the whole earth, and the smallest of things was caught in it. It rained—as it can do here—drops moulded in the hands of electricity.

The dinner was elaborate, but good, only it was like most hospitality, overdone — not in the cooking, but in the catering. Such a meal after a strict Lent might once in a way be forgiven, but coming a few hours after lunch on a hot day, when appetite is coy, it was somewhat ridiculous. The table was covered with beautiful carnations, and each vase had an aureole of gypsofilan round its head. Everything was of the best; champagne and dinner unexceptional. The ladies in the height (I am not sure that that is the exact word that describes it) of fashion. The men—some of them representative men—were as interesting as Johannesburg could produce. There was a judge, some of the leaders of the bar, some of the "nauseous brood" of the *Daily News*, some high officials, and

some whose pedestal of distinction was the hollow one of mines. "This," I said to myself, "is a pioneer state, and this is pioneering *à la Paris.*" But as they all played bridge afterwards, with one or two pedantic exceptions, I thought they were doing their pioneering after the manner of Piccadilly—which is, I suppose, to these rich and seeking to be rich people, the axis of the earth upon which the social world visibly, if a little madly, revolves. But I am not, having eaten salt, going to say more about the dinner-party.

XLVI

I WAS in South Africa during the Kruger obsequies. All burials are solemn; this, I suppose, was significant. The watery march over the sea had ended; the lying in state in Cape Town had begun; "floral tributes," as they are called, were pouring in. Here was the body of the great dead on its way to its native dust. It was expected that at Cape Town some member of the Government would show official respect to the remains; but the Prime Minister did not, and the only volunteer on the occasion was a Mr. S., an Irishman. However, the Prime Minister added to the interest of the occasion by contributing a joke instead of a "floral tribute," for he said, "I suppose it is an Irishman's inherent love of a wake that takes S. to the obsequies"—a joke quite in keeping with a funeral.

But, after all, it was a solemn summer journey. Kruger, as a man, had embodied a great Dutch idea, and that was national independence. For very common people, ideas that are not embodied in the flesh are too fine to be approached. In all cases the "word must be made flesh" before the common people understand it. In Kruger the idea of Dutch rule was substantially embodied, and was nearly physically realized. It is not to be

wondered at that after the ideas have wrestled their throw, and the idea has proved unequal in arms to the contrary idea of British supremacy, the people who were attached to it should regard this as a sad and solemn funeral, not only of Kruger, but of their hopes. There were at one time two great forces in South Africa so far as politics were concerned—Kruger and Rhodes. They are both dead, but although their bodies may "moulder" in South African soil, their souls, like John Brown's, are still on the march. "All great events," says Cherbuliez, in one of his works, "are the victory or defeat of an idea." And there is still the great duel of tendencies being fought out on the soil, which it is no exaggeration to believe both these men loved. It was therefore exceedingly interesting, as it were, to follow with the eye the body of this man from exile to the grave. Of course there were varying views of this dead march of Paul. It takes very little to found a big head-line in a newspaper; therefore "Remarkable Demonstration," "The Last Trek," "Huge Crowd at Bloemfontein," "Wreaths at Brandford," did not deceive one. But looking below the tempestuous surface of "head-lines," it was easy to gather that there was a solemn interest and a reverent curiosity in the lugubrious proceedings of the deliberate train. There had, it appeared, been large crowds at various places. "On Thursday carts were arriving in Colesburg from all parts of the districts of Colesburg, Ventresstad, and Philipstown, and an immense crowd gathered at the station, including many English." In

another paper we see, "There was a conspicuous absence of any attempt at mourning apparel or decoration." Again, "It is noticeable that the people of the Orange River Colony have only taken what is regarded as a languid interest in the passing of Kruger." While still another says, "Kruger was associated with a corrupt gang; he himself was corrupt and venal, and that his sole gift to the country is his body."

We confess we think the latter is a strained and superficial view of a great situation. There is more than a body here. There was more than a corrupt and venal politician there. The good is too often "interred" with a man's bones. But surely to-day even a fighting newspaper might remember some of the good and the great of the baffled man. He died rich, but any one will tell you that he must have had some virtue, for otherwise, with his opportunities, he might have made millions. He was, perhaps, corrupt, but he must have been much more to lead for years a people like the Boers. His goal was greatness, not a bank balance; and as he proceeds to his quiet grave, we ought to let polemics rest for a time. There surely may be reconciliation with the dead.

XLVII

I MENTIONED the newspapers of the Rand, and although the distance between these and literature is great, I was minded to sample South African literature. You do not know a country until you know its books. I know that there are as many books about South Africa as there were battles fought in the last war. But it was not these cups that I desired to drink dry facts from. It was suggested that if I would re-read Olive Schreiner's "Story of a South African Farm," I would get some of the local colour. Local colour! There is only one colour, and that is the colour of life. I re-read the book. It is by a woman that has seen a good deal with observant eyes, but who makes far too much of her observant conscience. It is not a story, although there are a few harrowing incidents which leave cicatrices on memory—the whipping of Waldo Farber; the abuse by the Transport rider, of the black ox; the death of Lyndall. The humorous scenes, like Tante Sannie's courtships, and Bonaparte Blenkin's transfer of his mercenary affections, are not humorous. The German foreman on the farm and his son Waldo are too good to be true, and too patient to be human. Their misfortunes are merited by their silliness, and the

contempt we feel for them makes impossible the sympathy which is expected of us. Then there are pages of vapid allegory, which are fine writing in a woman's way, but which only impede the wheels of narrative, which ought never to stick in the mud of dreams and speculations. There are talks with conscience, which show that the conscience in question, instead of being instinct with healthy feeling, has become hyper-acute like a corn. But the book, notwithstanding the fact that the writer "shows off" in every page, is a clever one, and written by a clever woman, who has thought and felt, and that is the only apprenticeship for a writer.

Em is human, although her affection is commonplace, and her fat character is only sketched; Rose, who marries her in the end, of course loves Lyndall, as does that curious combination of lout and genius, Waldo. But Lyndall is herself incomprehensible. She talks far too like a book; her philosophy is garrulous and silly; she seems to be virtue incarnate, but she has in her four years at school been seduced by an Englishman, whose good looks seem to be his recommendation, but who, like Waldo's stranger, is a mere shadow in the book. She proposes to marry Rose, although he is engaged to her cousin Em. Why, Heaven knows! She will not marry the Englishman, whom she pretends to love. Why, again, Heaven knows! She does not care for the baby she bears, and which only lived for three hours, although she gets her death sitting beside its grave. She pretends to love Waldo, and dies longing for something to worship.

She is a fine character to utter the author's thoughts and platitudes and elementary science, but she is not a woman, and, like Charles II., she takes too long to die. Still the book is one of some power, and shows that South African pens can do something in literature. Olive Schreiner shows in places that she understands the colour of life, but she has been urged on, by the idea of making literature, to giving us dreams which don't interest, confessions which are long and are only morbid, and speculations called "times and seasons," which have really nothing to do with the small trot of events which make her story of the farm.

XLVIII

There are too many hospitalities in Johannesburg. I have no doubt these are dictated in equal parts by kindness and ostentation. But the fact remains that too many people give dinner parties, or too many are kind enough to ask you to those they give. The people of Johannesburg are very proud of their fine houses and their fine cooks. I had, consequently, to dine out the evening following that on which I dined at the Pioneer dinner I have mentioned. Before I could reach the house of my host—he had sent me a dinner card with R.S.V.P. on it, which was unnecessary, but not the name of his house, which was necessary—I had a long drive through a Johannesburg evening with a perfectly cloudless sky, an orange tawny west where the day had gone, a perfect flower-show of stars in the firmament, and a soft breeze, which fanned me, but was so gentle that it did not irritate the dust into eruptions. It was a perfectly delicious drive in the best part of the day—its departure. The cabman lost his way to my friend's house, but I could have forgiven even greater divagations in such a twilight. But at last we got there—the last of the guests. Then came the

procession of viands. Don't let me lead you to suppose that there was nothing more. The feast was lavish, but there were men and women at it. My host and hostess were particularly intelligent. That in modern phrase means "up to date" and on the spot. I hope I contributed my fair share to the hilarity of the evening without usurping the ears of all. One anecdote contributed by an intelligent but somewhat slow American took an hour to tell; but it was in the end, as he would have said, effective. It was a story of Whistler, who was at a dinner-party in London, and who, having profited by the hospitality, when the time came to smoke, said he would smoke his own cigar if his host would permit him, and he left the room to get his cigar-case, which was in the pocket of his overcoat. The other guests heard a noise like a thirty-ton truck of coals going down the stairs, and went out in a group to see what had happened. They found Whistler at the foot of the stairs, still in a recumbent position, and he asked his host thickly, "Who was your architect?" "What do you mean?" asked his host. "Who was your architect?" asked Whistler again, through a fog. "Smith," said his host, humouring him; when Whistler, still on his back, said, "Damn that teetotaler."

This story, at the end of the eternity of telling, met with an excellent reception. Another man, fired to anecdote, told us a tale with a moral. It was told to a certain man that if he wanted to be happy he must secure the shirt of a perfectly happy man and wear it.

That, after washing, was to secure his felicity. He sought long, but could not find the happy man. Men might laugh, but each had some secret sorrow behind the mask of a smile, each had some skeleton in his cupboard. He almost despaired, until one day he saw a common workman returning from his work. He looked happy, he sang as he went home. "At last," said the seeker, "I have found the happy man;" and so he had, but the workman had no shirt. It was time to join the ladies.

XLIX

The hospitalities of Johannesburg and its inhabitants, if I were to write about them, would fill pages. The cooking of most of the cooks, whose performances I encountered, would itself be the subject of lengthy encomiums. I dined one night with a great political person, and another with "a great gold magnate." I think that is how the papers would describe him in his beautiful house in Bertramstown, a house, however, which he is about to desert for a new one in Park Town. The dinner was all English—except the cooking, which was better. The table decoration of flowers was umbrageous. The conversation rippled between the last musical play, which was the *Chinese Honeymoon*, and Chinese labour. The manners of our entertainers were English, and good manners make guests at home. There are, I need scarcely say, some of the plums of scandal in the pudding of conversation in Johannesburg. Are there not women in Johannesburg—although, perhaps, too few? But of the little whiffs of nauseous news which reached my ear I will say nothing. I will brave your disappointment. Even of the scandal on board the boat on our return voyage to England, although the public may

be dying to hear it, I will say nothing. I respect my page too much. The next forenoon I lunched with another gentleman in a still more distant suburb. Here, again, kindness and a too elaborate lunch met us. If people were to dine in the middle of the day, the lunch would have been excellent in its place, but as it was, my good manners made me do more eating than is wise at such an hour. I saw, too, that day a fine collection of heads and horns of the various antelopes of South Africa. The horns are beautiful, but the heads, I always think, smell of the museum. However, I had my adjectives ready, and it really was an interesting collection. In the evening, notwithstanding the exuberant luncheon, I had to dine with a very rising young barrister, who had asked a distinguished judge and some prominent members of the profession to meet me. My host has only been about three years in the colony, but is already in receipt of an income which would, if I mentioned it, induce Pump Court to emigrate. But I can say this for him, that from his intelligence and his painstaking assiduity, he deserves every (penny I was going to say, but there are no pennies in Johannesburg) "ticky" of it. There is a curious system of paying large annual retaining fees to barristers for their services, a practice that does not prevail at home. In England you can retain the services of a great lawyer or a great advocate (they are not necessarily the same) by a general retainer of five or ten guineas. In South Africa annual sums up to (I have one case in my mind)

£1500 are paid to retain the offices of a more or less successful advocate. My host has a beautiful little house high on the Park Town ridge, with windows which drink the sunsets. He has neat maid-servants and a cook. Here, again, the "creature" hospitality was respected. The conversation turned on the Christmas races, diamonds, the plagues of Africa (they did not reckon lawyers amongst them, and the ladies had a grudge at Sir Frederick Treves), but they were mostly ignorant of how many plagues there had been in Egypt. Most of the learned guests, who, like Chaucer's doctor, had not read much of the Bible, thought there had been seven plagues, but some modest and non-gambling half-crowns were laid that there had been ten. Ignorance of the Bible seems to be a matter of pride to lawyers. But a Dutch Bible was procured from amongst our host's law books—it was the only one in the house—and the question was solved by one of the guests who professed to read Dutch. There were some old bar stories told, of course, and one of a witty South African judge, who, knowing more of the man who was being tried, and who was, in fact, acquitted by the jury, than they did, said to the man, "You leave the court without any further stain on your character."

More hospitality. Are hearts better here than at home; are evenings more tedious, or is ostentation a shade more pronounced? I ask questions, but had to accept agreeable hospitalities. I lunched at the Rand Club with a friend. It was somewhat unique. I was

out of the atmosphere of law, and in the slightly pharmaceutical smelling one of medicine. But I rather like the pungent smell, although many of the pungent sights I saw after lunch, when I was taken to the district where the plague had been—where they had destroyed 4000 rats to save the rats of humanity that "scuttered" about the burrows—were less agreeable. In the outbreak of plague in March, 1904, there were 112 cases and 82 deaths. Prompt measures were taken to stamp it out. Threepence a head was offered for every rat, and 15,826 were destroyed between August, 1903, and July, 1904. And there are some left. The method of destruction employed at Odessa does not seem to have been adopted. Besides the destroyed site of the plague location I was taken to some opium-smoking dens, and to the plague hospital, which is some seven miles away from Johannesburg, and to some others, where I saw some "cases" which were calculated to eat into memory as vitriol does into metal. My host and his medical friends were pleasant companions, although, like all gentlemen connected with public health, they desired to see the State more despotic—and, of course, their desire was to make it a medical despotism. There is a great deal to be said for the theory that the angel from heaven that Carlyle desired to rule the world should have a medical degree. Amidst the sights of the afternoon was the dismantled tin suburb—which was the original Johannesburg—called Ferrira. Medical science, like Henry VIII., sees the advantage, if

you want to dislodge rooks, of pulling down their nests. Such nests (I think some of the places which had been none too soon declared unfit for human habitation) were as horrible dens as any town in Europe—and that is saying a good deal, for Europe is a show-place for hovels—could boast or blush for. But what had become of the rooks? gone, no doubt, to congest other districts. But the "plague had been stayed." There had been hundreds of people in the plague camp, not all ill with the plague, but the next worse thing—contacts. Looking at Johannesburg, and remembering that it is a volcano of rats, I would not be surprised to hear any day that that Asiatic undesirable —the plague—had visited the town again. But there are vigilant eyes on the rats and the slums. Amongst the sight-seeing of the afternoon was a visit to the Corporation Compound, which I have already referred to. The removal of refuse by specially constructed carts and by means of thousands of mules, must cost the town hundreds of thousands of pounds per annum. All this will be done in time by water carriage. But as yet the great town, so advanced in some ways, is very primitive in others. I did not see one of the departments of the town staff. The carcasses of horses, mules, and the like are removed from the town,[1] and are handed over to the obscene aasvogels (vultures) to be undressed to the bones.

[1] I see that during ten months—from January till October in the year 1904—no fewer than 2151 carcasses, mostly those of horses and mules, were so removed.

Opium dens here are like others. They are clean and orderly, the abode of a poison—nirvana. I do not know that opium-smoking is worse than drunkenness. It certainly keeps its sordid observances to itself instead of sprawling them with hiccoughs in the public eye. To that extent it has its advantages over alcoholic poisoning for amusement.

It was a beautiful summer afternoon as we drove through some of the black locations, where armed police awe to order, and then along the ridge of Hospital Hill, and saw the mountains of the north in their afternoon glory; past the fort—now a prison conducted upon lines which would make a new Howard a necessity in Johannesburg—I could make out of some of the things I was told about it, pictures as lurid as some of the weird works of Martin, and more nauseous than some pictures of the low Dutch school. But I hear the whole matter is being inquired into, and I have no wish to run away with the dirty linen which will have to be bleached in public opinion.

And so we drove past Orange Grove, where the trees were hung with beautiful fruit, over the veldt to the Plague Camp and Chronic Hospital, and the hospital where scurvy and worse diseases from the scattered Transvaal are treated. The medical man who is in charge is an intelligent and educated Dutchman, with a sub-acid flavour of bitterness about him. Perhaps he saw better days when he was under the Boers. To us he was hospitable and kind. We had coffee and

Boer bread and figs with him. He showed us his four months' old garden. Gardening here is not an art, it is a miracle. Everything was doing well, and the secret was, the sunshine, the virgin soil, and, he said, "bones." His garden was full of dry bones, and anon the dry bones would stand up as living fruit. One or two of the patients in the hospital, which he showed us with pardonable pride—they showed what disease could do in the way of aggression, if they did not show what medical science could do in the way of defence—were pictures which may be nightmares for years. After that we drove back through a quiet kind afternoon to my host's house, a villa on the high kopje which has the golf links on its shoulders. From the terrace here the view is incomparable. The mountains to the north, all rugged rocks, when looked at through a field-glass were all clothed in the gentlest and tenderest colours —pinks for the lights and quiet blues for the shadows. From the balcony we could see the smoke and some of the high-set houses of Pretoria. And now in contrast to the haggard day we had a genial little dinner-party, and conversation, which was an evergreen, and never died down during the whole evening; and about eleven o'clock, under a beautiful moon and constellations which, no doubt, Johannesburg would call "groups," my host drove me home, and I said "Good night, and thank you."

Next day I lunched with one of the judges, a genial and intelligent host, and had supper with one of

the most distinguished engineers in South Africa. But if I go on you will think I did nothing in South Africa but eat. I only desire to mention these facts to show how superabundantly kind these people were, and to justify a sigh of relief when I was at last enabled to disentangle myself from their dinners, and take the train at Park Station for Cape Town on my way to England.

L

The funeral of Paul Kruger at Pretoria has come and gone. All such occasions are half holidays, half obsequies. By many the burial was looked upon as an important political event, by others as a melancholy festivity. He was buried to make a Boer holiday. That the occasions of crowds and merry-making are not many in this slow, idling country is obvious. Here was one where business could be combined with holiday. The papers had prepared for it; the small town of Pretoria had filled like a vessel under innumerable taps to overflowing; beds were at a ransom, and many of those who by courtesy had come to do a last honour to the dead had to house themselves—if that is not the wrong word—in tents. On the day in question, not a warm one for summer, the crowd was, for a sparsely populated country, great and impressive. The Dutch take many things soberly, and they are adepts at funerals. Here was an occasion for solemnity and at the same time for drinks. Paul Kruger, not a great but by no means an inconsiderable man—a man who had made some ugly chapters in history for Britain, a man of faith and of ambition to

make his Dutch in South Africa a supreme people, and the Transvaal a country which should stretch, as his throne base, from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean, had died an exile perusing his Bible as usual, with more of habit than instruction in his reading. He had refused to live under the flag that had flouted him from South Africa, but here in his death he had been brought back to lie under its flapping folds.

All this was calculated to stir the slow fires of sentiment, to allow the air of enthusiasm to reach the sleeping embers, and that is the means to a blaze. But of course this end of the trek was made a deeper occasion. A letter which it was said Kruger had written, which inculcated unity amongst the Boers, and spoke of ultimate success in a way vague enough to satisfy the conquering pride of the British and to encourage the dormant ambition of the Dutch, was read over his poor remains. Speeches were delivered by Generals Christian De Wet, Shalk Burger, and Louis Botha, which were in Dutch and eulogy. That was to be expected, but the tone of these, while praiseful, was not incendiary. On the whole the festivities or obsequies passed off as well as could be expected, and nothing came, or is likely to come, of them. The people had passed the bier in thousands; wreaths had been piled on wreaths; children had sung hymns more or less in tune; the crowd had lined the footpaths, the women and children being separated from the men; the long procession had wound from the Sussana Zaal to the cemetery. The sough of the speeches had died away, and the

epitaph was spoken, "Hush." Many a fiery cross has come out of a grave, but here there is nothing but smoking flax, and I think it well that the Dutch had had their "outing" and that the tired clay had been laid at rest.

LI

SUNDAY in Johannesburg is honoured in the breach and not in the observance. The opera-house in the season, the theatres and the music-halls, are full, but the churches are empty. So one fine Sunday, when there were white clouds upon a sky of blue, we drove out to see Sir George Farrer's beautiful house and model farm, which, from some reminiscence of home, he has called "Bedford." It lies at the fertile foot of a range of rather hard-featured kopjes. It is surrounded to a large extent by woods of gum, mimosa, and fir trees, those dishevelled woods of the Transvaal. The gum tree is an untidy tree, continually denuding itself of its bark garments in slovenly ribbons. The house is a beautiful white house, rough cast, with red-tiled roof, and with an excellent stoep, a place where it is always afternoon. There is a long drive from the forbidding gate to the house, and the avenue is bordered with palisade-surrounded young oaks, which are flourishing for their age, and in a hundred years will make the avenue magnificent with gnarled giants and green shade. The farm and gardens speak well for South Africa, first because nothing but large capital could have won these from the clenched

hands of the rocky land, and second because, now that it is won, it is a garden. The roses were in perfection; fruit bent down the pear trees to within reach. There was a long hedge of well-grown quinces. There were small fields of mealies, lucerne, and of potatoes. Vines clambered over the arch which had been made for them, and the clusters of grapes were filling with sweet sap. There were signs of careful irrigation here and there. One old ringletted willow had a seat high in the shade of the branches, and steps leading up to the attic in the tree. It was obvious at first sight that here nature came more than halfway to meet the spade and the hoe. It was a small, not a large, South African paradise. But it had a new, an unfinished, an unkempt look which showed the hurry of the country. English gardens have taken centuries to make. Their green walks, their box-wood borders, these are the sedate products of years of quiet industry. At home "in trim gardens" we take our pleasures, but these, for all their wealth, were not "trim" gardens. It was a scramble here as at Johannesburg. It had a look of being run, like market gardens, for a profit, although the first outlay must, I fear, have precluded the balance being on the right side. What is this novelty which seems to oppress the country? Every one here seems to want to realize England in a jiffy. Their dinners, their parties, their gardens, their politics, are all sudden imitations of England. They must have strawberries, although these are not the same as we get at home,

and quails, and fish, and what not, and this anxiety to be up-to-date brings in the tin can and cold storage in aid of nature. Could not South Africa do something on its own account? Johannesburg is a young thing yet, not out of its teens, but it apes the manners of centuries. Many of their essays at politics have a young look, and remind one of children playing at a game, or of the hurly-burly of a comic opera. I believe they are capable to-day of half a dozen fiascos like the raid which made the world wonder. The people here regard themselves as "grown up," but they drive about in buggies, and are children. But in this sabbath day's journey to Sir George Farrer's beautiful estate I have got far away from the main matter, which in such a glorious summer day, in these hoyden gardens, with fine views down the woodland ways from his shaded stoep, was meant to be all praise, and has, like a veering wind, turned to carping.

LII

The finest climate in the world produced, after the hottest of times, two or three days which shivered until their teeth chattered. Every one said it was quite unusual; but in two nights the thermometer had gone down 20°. These two days, stabbing with daggers of east wind, were not specimen days. But they were persuading days, and when they came I was really not so sorry to leave the finest climate in the world, although to do so I had to make up my mind to the long dusty journey to the Cape and the long waterways which lead to home. I have no more pictures of travel to hang upon the wall of my page, for the journey from the Cape to England was empty of events. Coming north from the tropics to meet again our old friend winter, was almost as nice as the going south from his inhospitable chilliness into the inviting summer. A year of summers is too much. The voyage was a pleasant one. Going out we passed the Bay of Biscay when it was in a placable mood, but on our return the bay was stung to fury by a strong north-west wind. Its bristles of waves were on end. The sea tried to break or bend the ship over its watery knees, and, failing that, flung it from watery

hand to watery hand. Everything spoke of anger. The waves foamed at the mouth, and were streaked with livid streaks like tigers. Every gust was stridently insensate. Every whistle that rode a cord or rope hissed with hate. Every corner shrieked. It was a bad day, and the gloating sheen of the water gave back the dull stare of a blear-eyed sky. Ushant was not seen, and we made straight across the angry mouth of the English Channel for the Lizard on the Start light. After a weary day I slept early, but wakened again about twelve o'clock, and found that we had broached a calm again. We were within the shelter of land; we were in the arms of England. And so from light to light we made our way beside that lee-shore, until in the dark morning we were moored obscurely in the Southampton dock. And I am persuaded that the best picture of travel is Home.

THE END

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